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WALSH COLVILLE:

OR,

A YOUNG MAN'S

FIRST ENTRANCE INTO LIFE.

MANHATTAN



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FIRST ENTRANCE INTO LIFE.

A NOVEL.

A generous mind, tho' swayed awhile by passion,
Is like the steely vigour of the bow,
Still holds its native rectitude, and bends
But to recoil more forceful.

BROOKE.

Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies ;
Now thrive the armourers, and honours thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.

SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON:

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1797.

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WALSH COLVILLE:

OR, A

YOUNG MAN'S ENTRANCE INTO LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

We have still slept together,
Rose at an instant, learned, played, eat together;
And whereso'er we went, like Juno's swans,
Still we went coupled and inseparable!

SHAKESPEARE.

"AND so your father has consented to
"your going into the Guards; your com-
"mission is purchased, and your mind is
"fixed? Well—you are very happy, Stan-

VOL. I.

B

"hope!"

“ hope!”—These words were spoken by an elegant young man, as he rested himself upon the end of his fowling-piece, and were addressed to his best friend. A sigh followed the sentence.—Stanhope echoed it, but not so deeply—“ By Heaven, Walsh!” cried he, after a pause, “ I would give worlds to have “ you with me. Do persuade your father to “ buy you an ensigncy in the First Regi- “ ment:—you know not the rapture of being “ in the Guards.”

“ I know it well, at least I can guess it,” replied his companion pensively, “ but that “ is all—I dare not ask such a thing of my “ father: he would imagine that I was eager “ to leave him, and would impute my choice “ of the Guards to a desire for dissipation, “ when in reality it alone proceeds from a “ wish of being with my dear Stanhope, and “ a strong hope of soon having an oppor-
“ tunity

"tunity of fighting for my king and country.
"Oh! why was I born an only son?"

"Why, indeed," interrupted his friend impatiently, "but to rust at home in inactivity, when the military distraction is throbbing in every vein;—to be tied down to the side of a positive father, who will neither talk nor hear reason: who—"

"Hush! Charles," cried Walsh with a momentary severity; "this is a subject on which you and I must ever differ. Be more respectful, or be silent."—Stanhope smiled, and obeyed him. Walsh sighed again; and, taking up his gun, pursued his way in profound silence.

Charles Stanhope, who knew his friend too well to interrupt him in these fits, was amusing himself by counting the birds he had

killed, and nominating them as presents for different acquaintances, when Colville suddenly stopped, and laying his hand on the arm of his happy companion, looked at him, for a few moments, with a pair of the most eloquent blue eyes that nature ever formed.

" You may leave off goggling, if you
" please," said the merry Stanhope, lifting
his hand off his arm with careless gaiety;
" for I really am not girl enough to under-
" stand dumb glances. I'd thank you to tell
" me, in plain English, what you mean?"

Walsh laughed. " I *would* have said, that
" I wished—I wished—But, no, no, it is
" useless—it was an idle thought, and I have
" dismissed it."

" Nay, nay, but what *was* it?"

" Nothing—

"Nothing—a boyish inclination; as romantic, as impossible to be gratified."

"That won't satisfy me," exclaimed Charles eagerly, "I'll be cursed if it shall! Come, Walsh, out with this *boyish inclination*? I won't laugh at you, upon my soul, if it is even to go back to college again!"

"I was thinking, then," said Colville, "that if you dine with me to-day, and, in the course of conversation, were to mention that you had obtained the approbation of Sir William to your entering the army, that you were to leave Worcestershire in a fortnight's time for London, and that you would like to have me with you, I think my father might be brought to indulge me."

“ O ho! if that’s all, it’s done,” exclaimed Stanhope; “ the Herculean labour was to bring you fairly into wishing for a commission: and now that, after three months’ hard work, I have been able to convince you, that a soldier’s life is a thousand times more delicious than a country gentleman’s, and that Lord Suffex is little attentive either to your character or interest, to keep you stewed up at home like a little Miss, instead of bravely exposing yourself in a field of battle, I have nothing to fear, and all to hope. Again, my dear Walsh, you and I will share every pleasure, and every pain, that life affords!”—The two friends instinctively held out their hands to each other, and gave them one of those expressive pressures so well known to the feeling mind: delight beamed in the sunny orbs of Stanhope; and a mixed character of hope and doubt

doubt filled the more lovely but softer eyes
of his Colville,

The young men now bounded over the moor ; and Charles, giving his servant orders to return home with his game, entered Colville, the family mansion of his friend, and proceeded, with an appetite sharpened by exercise, to the dining-hall of Lord Sussex. Stanhope allayed his hunger, and permitted the cloth to be drawn before he began the attack. Like a wise general, he secured success, by patiently waiting till he saw the heart of his enemy softened by the generous juice of the grape, and ready to take any shape he chose to mould it to : but powerful as such an auxiliary was, he had yet much found argument to combat before he obtained his conquest, and then it was less yielded to *his* sophistry than to the beautiful persuasion of Walsh, whose look *alone* ought

to have triumphed. The palm of victory, however, Charles took to himself, and earlier than usual started up from the table, on seeing his Lordship nod, and inviting the enraptured Walsh to take a stroll with him through his father's grounds, rushed out to have the pleasure of talking more freely over the approaching joys which he had gained him.

"Kneel, and thank me, you lucky dog!" cried Charles, as they entered the park gate; "I have done more for you in an hour than you would dared to have attempted in a century: by Heaven! you will be the envy of half the regiment. Possessed of youth, health, charms, (enough to fire a world of vestals) money, rank, and the title of *Honourable*—damme, you have the ball of pleasure at your foot. I wish to God my father had twenty-five thousand

"a year,

“ a year, instead of a paltry ten ; and I, like
“ you, were in possession of an establishment
“ of five—death and the devil, I’d be the
“ very soul of the brigade !”

“ The soul of extravagance, perhaps, you
“ mean ? ” said Walsh gravely.

“ No, no, I’ll never be extravagant ; but
“ I would glory in spending a princely for-
“ tune with the air of one born to a throne.
“ I could envy you, but that’s mean ; and
“ one thing comforts me, that, as we saunter
“ through the park in our red coats, the
“ girls I attract cannot know whether I am
“ worth a pound, or a million.—A red coat,
“ my dear Colville ! God bless your soul,
“ do but reflect upon the charms of that—
“ a white feather ; a rich gorget ; a handsome
“ sword, worn with careless elegance ; a hat,
“ gracefully inclining backwards to discover
“ the

“ the face, or archly pressing the hair over
“ the left eye, giving *such* force, *such* fire,
“ *such* fascination—O ! by Jove, nothing
“ can equal it!”

“ Is *this* the source of your great zeal for
“ the profession of arms?” asked Walsh with
a smile, almost degenerating into something
like contempt. “ Is it for *this* alone that
“ you would have me quit a father who loves
“ me, and hurry into the middle of a me-
“ tropolis, with which at present I am but
“ little acquainted?”

“ It is my reason,” returned Stanhope
carelessly ; “ I don’t trouble my head about
“ whether it is yours. I love admiration,
“ I love society, and I idolize fine women;
“ a scarlet coat will give me every one of
“ them, and consequently I prefer it to a
“ black one. If I am called abroad, I hope
“ I shall

“ I shall behave like a man, and do my duty
“ as a soldier ; but, believe me, glory has not
“ half the attractions in my eyes, as have a
“ pretty girl with a rose on her cheek, and a
“ star in her eye. Love and Quiet are the
“ two deities I worship ; and yet I repeat
“ again, I can draw my sword in the hour of
“ battle with as much courage as those who
“ boast more.”

“ I do not doubt it,” replied Walsh; “ but,
“ believe me, did half the world hear you
“ talking thus of a cocked hat, and the rest
“ of its appendages, they would give very
“ little credit to the latter part of your af-
“ fection : however, I will only say, that
“ what would transport *you*, cannot move *me*.
“ The generosity of my father will more dis-
“ tress than please me ; as, in the centre of
“ dissipation and prodigality, I must endea-
“ vor,

" your, by temperance and economy, to
" prove myself worthy of it."

" That's as you please, to be sure," re-
turned Stanhope, shrugging up his shoulders
with an air of discontent; " yet I presume
" that you will make your circle of fru-
" gality large enough to contain a chariot, a
" phaeton and four, two servants, and a
" suite of fashionable apartments."

" Not quite so large, I assure you," re-
plied his friend; " my first setting out in life
" shall not be a presage of future ruin: a
" curriicle I *may* have, but one servant shall
" suffice me to attend it."

" Ah! well—I believe it's a lucky thing
" that I am not heir to the estate of Col-
" ville!" exclaimed Stanhope gaily, " for
" I'll

“ I'll be cursed if I would not run through
“ it in a month. As I am, there is no
“ danger of me, for without wings I can
“ never fly.”

The next day saw Charles Stanhope once more at Colville. Lord Suffex received him well, and at once opened the subject of his son's going into the army, bringing many strong reasons against it to dissuade him from the idea.—“ When I have once promised,” said he to his son, “ my word is sacred. It shall be so now: I still will give you a commission, if your wishes are yet the same; but I seek to prove to you the impropriety of them.”

“ But, my good old Lord!” cried Stanhope impetuously, “ what cause have you for disliking the army?”

“ I do

“ I do *not* dislike it,” returned Lord Sussex, “ I reverence and love it; but is that “ to say, that I would wish my son a member “ of it? No—he is my only child—he is “ my hope—he is my darling. With him “ all my expectations, all my happiness must “ die. England is now engaged in a de- “ structive war. Soldiery is now no boy’s “ frolick; a red coat must cover a brave “ bosom, or it ought to cover none. Youth “ and heroism are hourly falling beneath the “ hand of pestilence, or that of the enemy.”

“ Honour, Sir! the laurel wreath of “ victory!” interrupted Charles triumphantly,

“ Honour! Good God!” re-echoed Lord Sussex. “ Can the foliage of the laurel, “ though wove by a world around the urn “ of a beloved son, dry the tears of a father “ who sees every felicity cut off from the
“ remnant

“ remnant of his days? O, no!—Talk not
“ to me of honour—should I lose Walsh, I
“ should lose all that is dear, and what would
“ be left me?”

“ But you look on the worst side of the
“ picture,” cried Stanhope impatiently, as he
saw in the features of his young friend an
expression fatal to his wishes; “ the Guards
“ are now safe in Britain. Returned from
“ their long and dangerous campaign on the
“ Continent, they are now respiring in quiet,
“ and enjoying the sweets of happiness and
“ home. There is no fear that they will
“ again go abroad, at least not yet.”

“ The Guards!” repeated the Baron,
thoughtfully pausing as he spoke—“ the
“ Guards! I confess I do not like that my
“ son should be in the Guards.”

“ And

" And why?"

" Not from any dislike to them as a body
" of men, but because they are attached
" alone to the capital, that scene of fascina-
" tion and riot: where vice wears the garb
" of pleasure, and allures youth, step by
" step, into every species of guilt. The
" Guards are formed of men of fortune,
" who, having money to spend, mostly throw
" it away in what *they* style amusement, but
" in what *I* call destruction. They destroy
" the vigour of their minds by a foolish at-
" tachment to public places; they vie with
" each other in equipages and horses; they
" game; they drink; they have mistresses.
" In fact, they too often ruin both their
" healths, hearts, and fortunes, and die vic-
" tims to extravagance and folly. . And shall
" I suffer my son to rush blindly into such a
" snare? I should be unworthy the title of
" parent,

" parent, if I did. But Walsh shall still be
" free in his choice—I only *point* to him the
" danger—let *him* shun it."

" And do you think, Sir," cried Walsh,
raising his eyes from the ground with that
haughty consciousness of virtue common to
youth; " do you think that I have so care-
" lessly attended to your precepts, as to be
" open to the attack of these vices? They
" may attack me, but they shall never subdue
" me. Too happy in my own good opinion,
" too happy in yours and that of Stanhope's,
" I should be insensible and mad, if I could
" forfeit them but for a moment. No, Sir;
" I trust that the principles of your son are
" fixed upon a basis too solid to be shaken
" by the breath of popular arguments and
" sophistical fashion!"

“ I will distrust you no longer, my dear
“ boy ! ” replied Lord Sussex. “ God grant
“ that you may find such strength of resist-
“ ance in the time of need ! I see it is your
“ wish to become a soldier ; and Heaven
“ forbid that I should oppose my fears to
“ your inclinations ! I will instantly procure
“ you the commission you desire in the same
“ regiment with your friend. But to him I
“ must say, that as he is the motive of your
“ quitting me—as he was the first inspirer of
“ these thoughts—I expect that he will watch
“ over my son with a care little inferior to
“ my own. To him I confign a treasure
“ dearer to me than existence, the happiness
“ of my only child—and from him I exact
“ all the sincerity in telling you of your
“ faults, and all the anxiety for your wel-
“ fare, of true friendship.”

“ Don’t

"Don't give such a charge to *me*, for
"God's sake!" cried Charles, rather alarmed
by the solemnity of his manner. "Such a
"rattling devil as I am will have enough
"to do to limit my own extravagances to a
"thousand a year; and to bring home with
"me, every time I have leave of absence, a
"remembrance of the Lord's Prayer and
"Ten Commandments, to say to my mo-
"ther."

"Fie, fie!" cried Walsh, shaking his head;
"you might be grave *here*."

"Well, then I'll do the best I can," re-
sumed Stanhope; "at any rate, he shall
"never be a worse boy than myself—so
"good morning."—He caught up his hat as
he spoke, and, hastily nodding to them,
rushed out of the room.

“ As I now look upon you, Walsh,” said Lord Suffex, turning to his son on the departure of Stanhope, “ as already a soldier, “ I shall say a few words to you concerning “ the friendship you entertain for Charles “ Stanhope. While you and he were at “ Eton, and after you returned from it, I “ always admired him: his disposition ap- “ peared generous, and his uncommon vi- “ vacity I thought indicated something in- “ genuous and pleasing; but, during his visit “ in London, he has changed visibly.—I did “ not like his long stay with his mother’s re- “ lation, the Duke of Cheviot: *his* sons are “ all extravagant to a proverb; and are, one “ and all, libertines. The two months which “ he remained with them did him much “ harm. If you will impartially reflect on “ the difference of his behaviour, you will “ confess its impropriety. He swears; he is “ some fonder of wine; he is more at- “ tached

“ tached to horses, show, and splendor; in-
“ deed, every species of dissipation. It is
“ since then that he has got the notion of
“ the Guards into his head. I would be
“ sworn he imbibed it from the Humes, who
“ have all commissions in some of the three
“ regiments. They have introduced him to
“ the most abandoned of the brigade; and,
“ intoxicated by their appearance, seduced
“ with their noisy pleasures, he hurries on
“ to his ruin; and is, in my opinion, very
“ unfit *now* to be your friend.”

“ My God!” exclaimed Walsh, raising
his beautiful eyes towards his father with
astonishment and horror, “ is it my dear
“ Stanhope whom you have thus pourtrayed?
“ Believe me, Sir, you wrong him—wrong
“ him cruelly. He swears, I own it—but
“ what is that?—a folly merely: he stops at
“ oaths where they would be impious. He

“ is fond of wine, you say; have you ever
“ seen him intoxicated? He loves horses—
“ so do I; but what then?—I would not
“ purchase a stud to ruin my fortune. I
“ confess that he appears more attached to
“ dissipation since his London visit, but it is
“ only in appearance: he is thoughtless,
“ giddy, and volatile, and has a trick of
“ talking a great deal about what he does
“ not care for. Believe me, were he really
“ a libertine, he would not so freely own that
“ he loves pleasure. That thoughtlessness,
“ I know, may bring him into many dis-
“ agreeable situations, and may render him
“ easy to be persuaded; but, for that reason,
“ I, who am of a graver turn, and who have
“ had the happiness of being brought up by
“ the best of fathers, ought to strive, as a
“ friend, to be near him in moments when
“ he is in danger of being betrayed into in-
“ dispositions.”

Lord

Lord Sufex sighed.—“ Be it so then—
“ but O! may you never repent such con-
“ fidence in his virtue!”

Colville bowed, and left him.—From that moment Lord Sufex ceased to distress his son with arguments, which he now saw could only render him uneasy, not convince him: and as he must, at one time or other, become his own master, he began to think that it was better he should do so in *his* life, than when death would snatch him from his sight, and deter him from giving him that advice he would most probably want: yet these considerations could not prevent the Baron from breathing an unavailing sigh for a relief from his asthmatic complaint, which alone hindered him from accompanying so dear a son to London.—Having procured a pair of colours for Walsh, in the Duke of Gloucester's regiment, he informed him that he was free to

C 4 join

join his friend in quitting Worcestershire.— The joy of a young man on this intelligence, who burned at the name of glory, and whose heart, alive only to military impressions, was yet unacquainted with every thing relative to a metropolis, can alone be conceived by one of the same sex and disposition, whose fortune has thrown him into a similar situation.

Walsh and his friend, eager to emerge from the shades of Colville, hurried their departure with their natural impetuosity, and soon beheld the enchanting hour arrive that was to convey them from a sequestered mansion to the gay squares of London. At the request of Charles, Colville breakfasted at Hurst Lodge, to bid farewell to Sir William Stanhope, who parted from his son with the careless indifference of a modern father; only desiring him to keep within the limits
of

of his establishment, as otherwise he would pay none of his debts. Lady Stanhope shed a few motherly tears, as he rose to leave her; and his sister Harriet, who was in all respects the woman of fashion, coldly nodded her head to him as she took her seat at the breakfast-table; and bidding him tell the Cheviot family that she should be in town in the latter end of the season, bade him good bye with the utmost *sang froid*.—At home Walsh saw a wide difference: on entering the parlour, he found his father alone, whose face, as he raised it on their approach, was expressive of all a parent ought to feel on so momentous an occasion. Walsh drew a deep sigh—his heart sunk: even the thoughtless Charles looked grave, and sat down in silence.

“ The carriage has been waiting this half hour,” said Lord Sussex after a pause;
“ had

"had you not better go?"—He spoke this with a forced smile, and the young men rose. In the hall the Baron suddenly stopped, and catching Colville in his arms, folded him to his breast with true parental fondness.— "Bless you, my dear boy!" said he, releasing him from his embrace; "return to me but what you now are, and I can ask no more. Remember, that rashness is not valour: that duelling is not the act of great or good minds: extravagance is not liberality: nor can pleasure be found in intemperance. Remember, that your father's peace hangs upon your virtue; and that your future conduct must establish or annihilate it for ever! Recollect, that I will forgive imprudences, but never will pardon excesses. You have thought yourself capable of resisting temptation, and I consent to your flinging yourself in its way; but beware of forfeiting the word "you

"you have given me, to return to me with
"a pure heart."

Walsh turned back as he concluded; the tears of affection were in his eye; his heart dreaded itself; and for a moment he wished to escape from what had once been his strongest desire.—“O, Sir! I fear—I fear “I have not enough considered,” said he, in a hesitating voice, while he clasped the hand of his father. Lord Sufsex read his soul: he saw it powerfully actuated by tenderness, and softened by parting; yet he still beheld there the same strong desire of accompanying his friend. He replied only by another fond adieu; and recommending Colville to the care of Stanhope, saw them leap into the post-coach, and then turned into the house.

CHAP. II.

Guard well thy heart, fly her enchanting voice,
Dare not to view so elegant a form;
Avoid the lustre of her radiant eyes,
Or in the lover I shall lose my friend!

PHILIPS.

ON the arrival of the friends in London, they determined not to separate; and having procured apartments together in a very elegant house, they agreed to live in all respects with the familiarity and equality of brothers. Walsh Colville and Charles Stanhope were at this time about nineteen; but in their age alone they held a resemblance. Colville was formed with the soft elegance, the graceful delicacy of the fabled Narcissus; his figure was such, that it gave an undescrivable

scribable attraction to his every movement. If he bowed, it was with an air peculiarly fascinating. If he danced, he “ disclosed “ motion in its every charm.” If he rode, he reminded the observer of young Harry, and seemed “ as if an angel dropt down from “ the clouds, to turn and wind a fiery Pe-“ gasus.” If he spoke, “ the mute wonder “ lurked in men’s ears, to list his sweet and “ honeyed sentences.” His features were beautiful; his complexion fair; and his cheeks and lips enriched by the rosy tint of health and youth. His hair was silken, thick, and light, and half concealed a forehead, from beneath whose dark brown arches beamed eyes like Love’s, “ to languish and “ command;” soft, blue, and lucidly radiant, they scattered expression, sweetness, and benignity, wherever the turned. To a figure thus romantically lovely, he joined the gentlest heart, and the most cultivated mind. A
beautiful

beautiful sobriety of character, and an interesting artlessness of manners, mixed with all the elegant address of finished life, rendered him equally the admiration of the most intelligent, and the most illiterate. Warmly susceptible of every affection, his friendship for Charles Stanhope, in a breast like his, unoccupied by love, rose to a height of romantic enthusiasm, which made him obstinately shut his eyes against every fault he had, and made him either hate or despise those who would have depreciated his worth. A too flexible disposition rendered him easy to be persuaded into any action that did not immediately appear to him in the light of an error. One flimsy argument from Charles, gilded over by fond attachment, could lead him into any thing. Firmly resolute in withstanding threats, he was not able to resist tenderness; and to that fatal softness he owed all his distresses.

Charles

Charles Stanhope was his exact reverse, both in person and mind. His figure was fashionably elegant, not critically fine: his face was handsome; his eyes large, black, and brilliant—full of fire, wit, and vivacity: his complexion was less delicate, and more florid than his friend's: his hair was profuse in quantity, and in colour a rich chesnut: he danced well; sung well; rode with skill; breathed the flute; touched the harp; but in all was inferior to Colville:—yet Colville thought otherwise, and considered his friend as his superior in all these accomplishments. His heart was naturally good and generous, even to extravagance: ardent in his attachments, but not steady; easily attracted, and as soon disgusted: fond of variety, amusement, and admiration; thoughtless, giddy, and inconsiderate in the extreme, he required little persuasion to make him rush into every dissipation. Full of false notions of what constitutes

constitutes a man of refinement and polish, and guided wholly by the voice of others, he imagined, that to drink, swear, game, and intrigue, was the height of fashionable accomplishment; and struggled for ever against those sentiments which he had imbibed from Walsh; ashamed to think, that what he heard denominated vulgar prejudices, should have any sway in his mind.

Stanhope had prevailed on Colville to accompany him to see the Humes; and Colville had consented merely to oblige his friend, conceiving, that as Lord Suffex had spoken slightingly of them, he could be as distant to them as possible; and, by keeping up the appearance of civility, please their cousin Charles, without disobliging his father. The Duke of Cheviot's family consisted of three sons, and five daughters. Three of the latter were married far above their expectations,

tions, as the confined income of their father, and their no more than common beauty, hardly rendered such matches as they had made probable: but the duchess was artful and interested, and laid in wait for all young heirs of title and fortune; to her, therefore, they were indebted for their husbands. The remaining daughters, Lady Lucy and Lady Marcellina, were girls of showy persons, attractive manners, and bewitchingly accomplished; but they had vacant heads, and hearts coldly insensible to every thing but fashion and splendour. The eldest son, the Marquis of Lomond, had a Lieutenant-Colonelcy in a regiment of dragoons, and bore an unexceptionable character, but Walsh was not fortunate enough to meet with him, he being then in Scotland; and Stanhope, who took his creed from the second son, pictured him as one not at all to be wished for, being every thing that is puritanical and disagree-

able. The next son, Lord John, held a troop in the Life Guards: he abounded in that boisterous merriment, so often mistaken for spirit; was selfish, unfeeling, and debauched to a degree of vulgarism; the companion of the worthless profligate and the Newmarket spendthrift; yet replete with drollery and merriment, he contrived, not unfrequently, to infatuate young men with his apparent good-humour, and passed, upon the unjudging part of the world, as a man of talents, and real excellence of heart, but, unfortunately, too much addicted to the follies of the day. The youngest of the male part of the family was the most dangerous. Lord Archibald Hume was handsome in his person, and insinuating in his manners; he had a general knowledge of every thing; had read much, but thought little: at college he had been distinguished for his abilities, and had been looked forward to as one of great promise;

promise ; but entering immediately after into the army, and falling into improper connexions, he gave himself up to every species of licentiousness which can disgrace a man. He knew well the theory of virtue, and the practice of vice. He was fraught with specious excellence ; and could assume, whenever occasion required, an artless ingenuousness, that often made it be believed he was no more faulty than he owned himself.— Being extremely fond of the fashionable fun of breaking a young man into folly, he industriously tried every means to fascinate the unsuspecting ; and then used that fascination to plunge them into ruin. He no sooner saw Walsh Colville, than fixing on him for future prey, he attacked him with an art in which he was but too successful ; and by the time Walsh had seen him thrice, he confessed to himself with surprise, that his father had mistaken the character of at least one

branch of the Duke of Cheviot's family.— Colville insensibly became a more frequent visitor there, than he once thought he could have been. Attracted as much by the pleasing society of Archibald, as by the art of Lady Lucy, who excelled in touching the harp, and warbling Italian airs, Walsh, who was distractedly fond of music, sought her company with avidity. Lord Archibald saw this with secret pleasure, and already congratulated his sister on so rich a conquest. Colville had delivered letters from his father to several houses of distinction, and, amongst others, to that of the Earl of Tewksbury.— The family of this Nobleman consisted of a son and a daughter: the former of which was cruizing, in the frigate he commanded, up the Mediterranean; and the latter, at the age of seventeen, was presiding as the mistress of her father's house.

Lady

Lady Frances Surry was formed in nature's softest moments, for her soul was every thing that is gentle, diffident, and unassuming: beneath the graceful modesty of extreme youth, she concealed a rich imagination, an elevated mind, and a heart teeming with all the beautiful affections of life. Her person was in a style of beauty not calculated to catch the multitude, but full of every attraction for refined taste; it was slender, delicate, and finely proportioned; graceful in every action, but retiring unobtrusive, "with all the modest charms of sweet distrust." Her features were small, and truly Grecian, animated by a pair of the softest eyes in the world, whose blue orbs were usually cast down beneath the fringe of long lashes. Her complexion was touchingly fair, and her bloom rather tender than vivid. Her smile was sweet and unaffected, displaying (as it parted two vermillion lips) a

set of pearly teeth; a length of the fairest hair that can be imagined fell over her forehead in ringlets, and then streamed down in long uncurled tresses, covering her finely falling shoulders and beautiful neck. Her hand and arm were lovely, and her voice bewitchingly sweet.

Such was the only daughter of Lord Tewksbury, whose beauty Walsh acknowledged the instant that he beheld her, and the power of which he felt, even in the moment that he acknowledged it. She had been from home when he first waited upon the Earl; and since then, constant engagements with the Humes, for more than a fortnight, had prevented him from repeating his visit to Surry House; and he saw, with something like vexation, that he was not master of himself for a week to come. He had unconsciously become so familiar in the

Duke

Duke of Cheviot's family, that his presence was never excused from any party; and he generally found himself placed as the protector of Lady Lucy, whether in riding or walking, and saw himself continually exposed to the drollery of Lord Archibald, who teased him if he was serious, hinting that his sister was the cause of it; but Colville parried his attacks with pleasantry, and thought no more of them.

Walsh had as yet conducted himself like the son of Lord Suffex, and his father's kind approbation of his conduct had given him a false confidence in himself. He had escaped also from the mess-room (on first taking guard) without being intoxicated; and now thought himself secure from similar temptations. He had indeed been persuaded to make a more brilliant appearance than he had at first intended. He had purchased a

magnificent vis-à-vis, a curricle of more than common elegance; had a couple of servants to follow it in splendid liveries; and had, along with Stanhope, hired a ready-furnished house in a fashionable street, and lived in a style of dazzling expence; yet he still kept within the limits of his income, as he spent his fortune, not squandered it.— The first moment that he could snatch, he offered to take his friend to Devonshire Place, to introduce him to the Earl of Tewksbury. Charles caught at the proposal, and accompanied him,

As the carriage of Colville rattled through the porter's gate, Stanhope's eyes lighted up, and, catching the hand of Walsh, he cried— “Now for seeing the second Helen!”— They leaped out, and flying up stairs, followed the servant into the drawing-room. The soft sounds of a female voice, mingling

with

with the tones of the pedal harp, struck the ear of Colville, as the door opened, and presented to his eye Lord Tewksbury hanging over the lovely girl we have before described, with an expression of fond delight. She rose abashed from the instrument, while a sweet blush suffused her cheek. She bowed, as her father introduced them, but bowed in silence. Their visit was long, and so agreeable, that neither of them knew how to depart; nor would they have thought of it all, had not the Earl enquired if they were engaged for dinner on a particular day in the next week; and being answered in the negative, he told them, that he should send his servant the next morning with a card of invitation. Reminded by this, that they were probably preventing his Lordship from some other engagement, the young men rose, and bade adieu to him and the lovely Lady Frances.

In

In their way home Stanhope spoke of Lady Frances : he was reserved in expressing his opinion, but he was assiduous to draw out of his friend what *he* thought of her person and manners. He imagined that he saw more than Colville really felt; for powerfully struck himself, he thought his friend was equally captivated; and conceiving him desperately in love with her, he feared to raise his jealousy by lavish praise: he therefore contented himself with saying, that she was apparently a very fine girl; and then alighted with Walsh at the door of their house in Grosvenor-street.

When they dined at Lord Tewksbury's, Charles was more impassioned, (for we will not dignify the emotion that he felt with the name of love) and Colville more pleased. The seeds of the tenderest attachment were sown in the breast of the latter; but until

certain

certain knowledge of her worth could powerfully engage his esteem, he was averse to call the pleasure which he felt in her society by a title it as yet did not deserve. Walsh, though an enthusiastic admirer of beauty, was not one who could be caught by it alone; and unused to that folly, which young men are now so apt to run into, of styling every strong attraction to personal charms by the name of faithful affection, thought of Lady Frances with a respectful admiration, mingled with the tenderest interest. But the hot-headed Stanhope, less refined in his attachments, and not so sublimated as his friend, devoured, with greedy eyes, the beauties of Lady Frances; and in his own thoughts did not care a curse for her mind, when such loveliness and such fortune lay before him. Could Colville have seen this, probably he would have ceased to esteem Charles; but Charles, conscious that such sentiments would
be

be reproyed by his friend, kept them, and his passion closely concealed.

The evening passed in the sweet sociability of a select circle; in which Lady Frances and her cousin Jessie St. Leger shone pre-eminently charming.—Jessie was not tall, but elegantly formed: her features were antique, and her eyes of the deepest sapphire; her colour was a tint deeper than her cousin's, which gave them a fire and lustre almost too dazzling to gaze on: her hair was dark and glossy, and her manners full of attractive wildness and eccentric vivacity. Stanhope laughed with her, sung with her, and complimented her; but he still held his eye on Lady Frances, whose softness of behaviour yet more allured him than the lively wit of Jessie. Her Ladyship, at the request of her father, accompanied her harp with her voice in a favourite air of Banti's. As Walsh listened

listened to her dissolving tones, he felt his soul rise, on each swelling note, into a paradise of sound. At parting, Lord Tewksbury repeated his invitation, and Colville accepted it with joy.

From that moment the raillery of Lord Archibald Hume, about Lady Lucy, fretted and perplexed him. Plagued to death with insinuations which he knew not how to reply to, as they were never made seriously, he rushed into more amusements than he formerly did, and oftener met his gay acquaintance at Tavern dinners. He went less frequently to Cavendish Square; and when he did go, was never very urgent in requesting songs from Lady Lucy: indeed, when she did touch the harp, he recollect^{ed} the superior execution of Lady Frances Surry, and imagined that he had then listened to the voice and shell of an angel, and now was enduring

enduring the tuneless pipe of a mere mortal. Lord Archibald saw this with extreme vexation, for he was anxious to unite his sister to a man of Colville's expectations; and therefore used every mean but concealed art to entrap him into an inclination for her. Lady Lucy, acquainted with her brother's schemes, promised her aid to realise them.

Colville saw with pain that the heart of his Stanhope was not so entirely his own as it had once been: he seemed nearly as much attached to Lord John Hume, whose character and society were equally odious to Walsh. With his advice, Charles had hired a house on Blackheath with profound secrecy, and rode often out, unknown to Colville, with parties of his friends: it at last came to his knowledge, and he affectionately remonstrated with him on the folly of his conduct; reminding him that his income was not large enough

enough to afford such a piece of extravagance.

Stanhope coloured as he spoke—he bit his lip, and his eyes flashed fire.—“By Heaven’s, Walsh!” cried he, struggling with passion, “I would take this from none but you! Give me your advice as you used to do, and I will follow it: but to remind me of my comparative poverty—by Heaven it is too much!—you forget I have any feeling.”

Colville caught his hand in an agony of distress—“Hear me, Charles!—Upon my soul——”

“No, no, Sir; you are tired of my friendship—you are eager to throw me from you—you consider me as an incumbrance—you are ashamed to live in such familiarity with

" with one of so small a fortune: be it so—
" I will leave you this day—I will release
" you from all your engagements."

" My God, Charles! will you not hear
" me?" interrupted Walsh, his sweet eyes
full of anguish. " It is *you* who are cruel—
" *you* who would estrange yourself from me.
" Heaven knows that I love you too dearly
" to hurt you designedly. My purse, my
" heart is yours, and shall ever be so. Do
" what you like, I will never again offend
" you with my advice. But I see that you
" have ceased to regard me, or you would
" not doubt my truth!"—He paused, and
looked anxiously on the face of Stanhope,
who, though he did not withdraw his hand,
yet stood in a haughty silence, biting his lips,
and frowning with sullen anger.—" Then
" you will not forgive an unintentional
" fault?" asked Colville.—" Very well. I
" have

" have then lost my friend by my anxiety
" for his future welfare ; and I have now no
" business in London. The moment you
" leave me, that moment will I throw up
" my commission :—my actions at least shall
" prove to you the sincerity of my heart."—
He paused again. Stanhope did not yet
answer.

Walsh rose indignantly, his lovely cheek
crimsoned by rising pride, and, relinquishing
the hand of Charles, approached the door,
at the same time saying—" I have been de-
ceived in you, Sir ! cruelly deceived—
" and I now leave you for ever!"

" Stay, stay, Walsh !" exclaimed Stan-
hope, awakening from his obstinate silence,
and forcibly catching his withdrawn hand ;
" I do believe that you did not mean to pain
" me, and I confess myself in fault. Pardon

" the inconsiderate heat of my temper, and I
" promise that I will give up the house to-
" morrow?"

Walsh's affectionate heart melted in a moment; and, as he pressed his friend to his bosom, a tear that he could not repress fell from his eye.

CHAP. III.

To thee, my friend, I will not be ashamed,
Even to avow my love in all its fondness.

THOMSON.

THUS reconciled, they went together to the house of the Duke of Cheviot, where an incident happened that both perplexed and distressed Walsh.

After tea, Lord Archibald proposed adjourning to the music room, and having songs: the ladies consented; and Walsh was summoned to request an air from some one of the company. Contrary to the expectation of Lord Archibald, he called on a Miss Vansittart, who rose instantly, and seated

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herself

herself at the Piano. He saw the colour leave the lips of Lady Lucy, (for it was impossible to pierce the crust of rouge upon her cheek), and beheld her, during the execution of the song, struggling with some very strong emotion; but he appeared not to notice it, and, through the whole of the evening, neither asked her to sing nor to play. Her brother was earnest in his solicitations; but she excused herself with evident displeasure, and could not be prevailed on. At length her mortification passed off: but a new insult, as she considered it, tortured her again. When the company were called to the supper-room, Colville took the hand of Miss Vansittart, merely to avoid Lady Lucy, whose attentions were now become, he knew not why, quite disgusting; and in her hearing said—“ My fair songstress will sit beside me at “ table.”—Her Ladyship looked at him with

with reproachful resentment, and, hastily rushing past him, flew into an adjoining apartment. Lord Archibald followed her out, and did not join the party till supper was half over.

"Where is Lucy?" asked the Duchess on his entrance,

"Gone to her chamber, Madam," replied her son. "She begs that I will apologize to the company for her abrupt departure, "but she is really too much indisposed to "attend them to-night."—"Poor Lucy "fainted in my arms," said he, in a low tone of voice, to Walsh, as he sat down beside him, "and only recovered by a burst of "tears.—Something has gone to her heart.— "What is the matter betwixt you?"

"Matter! what *should* be the matter?" replied Colville, petrified with astonishment.
"Do you imagine that *I* was instrumental in
"making her Ladyship faint?"

"Good God! how pale you look, Walsh!" interrupted Lord Archibald. "Are *you* ill
"too? I am sorry I have affected you so
"much. Indeed I never thought till now
"~~that~~ you were serious to my sister—but
"you have it in your own power to restore
"both her and yourself."—He did not allow
Colville a moment to reply, but hurried
away to the call of Lady Marcellina, from
whom he did not separate for the remainder
of the evening.

When Walsh returned to his own house at night, he retired with a mortification and displeasure unusual to him: he was not so

easily

easily deceived as to mistake the feelings of Lady Lucy for the effect of love: he saw more of disappointed pride, and destroyed expectation in her behaviour, than was consistent with the unobtrusive sorrows of a heart hopelessly attached. He was displeased at her poor appeal to his pity by her conduct, and angry that she should be able to impose on her brother. After considering the subject, he resolved to seize the first opportunity that offered, and undeceive Archibald in regard to his having any regard for her.—In the morning he was surprised by the appearance of Stanhope in his dressing-room, who came to ask him to take his guard for that day, as he wished to ride out to Blackheath to discharge his servants, and give up his house. Colville promised he would, with real satisfaction, happy to find, by his friend's conduct, that the altercation

of the day before had left no bad effects on his mind.

As he was returning after the parade to breakfast, he met Lord Archibald Hume, and instantly putting his arm through his, told him, that he had something very disagreeable to explain to him. Archibald stopped him, declaring that he was going to the Colonel on most particular business, but would meet him at the mess, and would remain with him the evening, after the rest of the officers were gone. Colville desired him not to fail, and they parted. In the Mall he was accosted by Lady Frances Surry; she was leaning on the arm of her cousin Jessie. His eyes glittered with joy, and a blush of graceful surprise seemed to reflect that which passed over the face of the lovely Frances. Jessie caught his arm, and taking it with a smile,

smile, said—"Really this is quite delightful!
"Will you walk with us, and I'll send away
"the servant?"

He looked to Lady Frances for her permission; but too timid, too much afraid of discovering her real wishes, she was silent. Colville looked confused.—"I fear my company would be an intrusion?"

"An intrusion!" echoed Jessie—"entertaining you mean! We were just talking of you; and my cousin was just saying, "if Colville should be on guard, and we should meet him!"

"Heavens! Jessie," exclaimed Lady Frances, colouring deeply; "how can you repeat such folly?"

Walsh

Walsh bowed in silent pleasure, and turned with them down the Mall. The conversation then fell upon the young men who belonged to his regiment. Lady Frances spoke in terms of dislike of Lord Archibald Hume. Colville seemed surprised. He defended the character of Archibald; and told her Ladyship, with a tone of displeasure, that her father had been rather illiberal in giving the opinion of him, which he wished to have impressed on his mind.

"O ! as to Lord Archibald, he is tolerable," cried Jessie; "because if he is wicked, he does it cleverly; he has dency in finning: but for Lord John ! of all brutes, he is the most disgusting—drunk from morning to night—swearing—gaming!—O ! what a vice drunkenness is! Don't you think so, Mr. Colville?"

"A most

"A most horrid one certainly, Madam,"
replied our young soldier. "A man, when
"he is intoxicated, is, in my idea, of no
"higher estimation than a beast: and were I
"a woman, before I would marry a man
"who was at all addicted to it, I would
"perish for love—she might as well unite
"herself to a madman."

"Nay, as to that," cried Jessie smiling,
and displaying her white teeth as she spoke,
"I don't know—many a very amiable wretch
"has been seduced into it five or six times,
"and yet, upon the whole, are good sort of
"creatures enough. Gentlemen in your
"profession, particularly in the Guards, can-
"not escape it well: I don't know really
"how you can get off at all. Harry Moly-
"neux and Colonel Afton have often told
"me, that a man must be more than man to
"bear

" bear all their ridicule. Pray how do you
" go on?—A little *elevated* once a week, eh!"
She said this with a good-humoured archness; and Colville, as he replied, thought he saw a degree of anxiety in the raised eye of Lady Frances,

" I don't pretend to have more merit than
" Harry Molyneux, or Colonel Aston; yet
" I solemnly assure you, that since I have
" been in the Guards, which is now three
" months, I have never yet been led into
" such imprudence; and I *have* been at-
" tacked—attacked by the whole brigade."

" Well said, Colville!" exclaimed Miss St. Leger.—" Capital indeed! Why you
" have made yourself quite a hero—but one
" blessed thing is, that we women are taught
" from our cradles not to believe all which
" you

" you men say: and therefore, to speak the
" honest truth, I think here you have rather
" wandered over the boundaries of truth."

Walsh bit his lip with some vexation, and turning to Lady Frances—"Upon my soul,
" Madam!"

" I believe you, I assure you," interrupted she with a look of ineffable sweetness: " so-
" briety is so amiable a virtue in my opi-
" nion, that I would not hesitate to place it
" amongst the catalogue of good qualities
" possessed by all my friends. I should
" shudder at the idea of any person, for
" whom I bear an esteem, degrading himself
" below the brute creation, and sinking into
" a situation that I ficken to think of. I
" should despise any man who had not for-
" titude sufficient to withstand the blandish-
" ments

"ments of persuasion, or the mockery of
"ridicule."

Walsh thanked her for her reliance on his word; and, after a long walk, conducted them to their carriage. Jessie asked him to step in; but he refused, telling them he was on guard, and could not leave his duty.

At dinner he met Lord Archibald Hume, who seemed rather in low spirits, and spoke little. After the cloth was removed, Walsh enquired the cause of his melancholy; he replied, his uneasiness about his sister, who was still much indisposed.—Colville coldly expressed how sorry he was, and tried to turn the conversation; but Archibald resumed it, and said in a low voice—"How
"ridiculous you both are. She has lost her
"health through some foolish misunderstand-

"ing;

“ ing ; and you, too proud to acknowledge
“ your fault, have lost your spirits—for you
“ cannot deny but that you are devilish
“ dull.”

“ Good God ! will you persuade me that
“ I am mad !” exclaimed Colville, trans-
ported out of himself. “ I tell you, I care
“ no more for your sister than I do for
“ any other girl. I swear to you, that——”

“ What the hell are you about there ? ”
asked an officer half intoxicated. “ Won’t
“ Colville drink ? Damn it, force it down
“ his throat.”

“ Poh, poh, stuff ! ” cried Lord Archibald ;
“ I was taxing Walsh with being in love
“ with my sister Lucy. Don’t you think so,
“ Stopford ? ”

“ Why,

“ Why, upon my soul,” replied he whom he spoke to, “ there are strong symptoms! “ He neither drinks nor talks like any body else, he is so cursed serious and sentimental: and as he is always at your house, “ I think it more probable that the fair dulcinea is Lady Lucy, than that it should be any person else.”

“ O, yes! he is in love with Lady Lucy,” cried he who had been so eager to thrust the wine into the mouth of Colville; “ he told me so t’other day. Yes, yes—he told me so:—O yes, he’s in love—I say he told me so—damn me if he didn’t.”

“ None of your damned lies here, Nugent!” interrupted Lord Archibald. “ You don’t know what you’re saying, so hold your tongue.”

“ What

“ What do you say, Sir?” cried Nugent, rising. “ You are a cowardly rascal, and “ I’ll fight you—” and down he dropt senseless at the foot of Lord Archibald. His Lordship gave him a push from him with the point of his boot, and set on Colville again: it was in vain that he denied it—the whole room seemed in a confederacy against him.

“ You’re in love, I tell you,” cried Stopford.

“ I am not.”

“ You are. I’ll bet you a dozen of wine “ this moment, that if I ask the first person “ that comes into the room, he will say that “ you are in love with Lady Lucy.”

“ Done,” cried Walsh.

"If you lose, you'll drink part?"

"No, no—that is not fair."

"Ah! you see," cried another, "that he knows it will go against him. Poor woe-begone knight!—poor piping Damon!—poor disconsolate shepherd! go get him a willow garland."—They all set up a loud laugh of contemptuous merriment.

"Well then, I take your bet, Stopford," cried Colville, almost mad with anger.

The door opened as he spoke, and three officers appeared. Stopford flew up to them—"Isn't Walsh Colville in love?"

"Yes,"—was the reply from each.

"Who is it with?"

"With

"With Lady Lucy Hume, I suppose."

Stopford set up a shout of triumph.—
"Now, Colville—now for the wine!"

Colville flung down his purse in a fury.—
"Send for it—drink it, and go to the devil
"if you like. If I am to be so tortured
"about a woman I don't care a curse for, I
"swear that I will——"

"Challenge us all!" interrupted Lord Archibald.

Walsh did not reply, for he was vexed beyond sufferance.

"Mind, you are to drink all!" said Stopford, as the Burgundy entered.

"No, Sir, I am not," replied Walsh haughtily.

"Nay, nay, by Heaven's you said so—I appeal to them all, if you did not?"

"Appeal to the devil, Sir," said Colville angrily; "I said no such thing."

"Yes, you did, was the cry of the whole room; so if you say *no*, you call us all liars, and must meet every one of us."

Colville bit his lip.—"I see I am to be forced into it—but I will not: I will do just what I like. I will either drink, or not, as I please; and he that *dares* say, I shall do otherwise, shall repent it."

"Bow, wow!" burst from the lips of one opposite him, in a kind of imitative raillery.

Walsh

Walsh put his hand on his sword—his blood boiled, and sunk again: he took off his hand—“ You are intoxicated, Sir,” said he, “ or——” —He stopped again.—Furious with their behaviour, he drank glass after glass, and forgot what he was doing, till, fired by the Burgundy, he had no longer reason to remember that it was improper, and he soon yielded to the proposal of Lord Archibald to go to the masquerade. In the madness of the moment, he lost sight of his duty; and, without any of them reflecting on the consequence, the probability of his being broke for leaving guard, they sent for dominos, and drove to the Opera-House.—As this charming group, linked together arm in arm, reeled round the room, (for, alas! the lovely, the amiable Walsh Colville, was now in that state he had so lately reprobated), a beautiful-formed girl in the character of a rustic, hanging on the arm of

another in the dress of a sailor, caught the attention of Colville. He seized the hand of the rustic, at the same time throwing away his mask, and sung, in the sweetest voice imaginable :

" O come, pretty maid, will you go a campaigning,

" Will you marry a soldier, and lie in a barrack?"

" Never, Sir," answered the lady, in a tone so agitated, that it surprised him.

He drew her nearer to him, and swore that she was a little angel.

" An angel that can read what passes in
" the souls of mortals," replied she, in a voice more assured, but not less resentful.—

" I see, that beneath the fairest form is hid
" the most hypocritical heart; that the morn-
" ing sun hears you condemn a vice the

" moon

" moon blushes to see you practise. Be
" more prudent, Sir. Respect your cha-
" racter at least: you may be broke for this,
" and you are then for ever ruined with
" your father."—So saying, she burst from
him, and, flying after her little sailor, mingled
in the crowd.

Walsh stood as if awakened from a dream; his surprise had nearly sobered him, and a myriad of vague and terrifying conjectures about whom this could be rushed over his mind. He looked round for his companions, but finding that they had dispersed amongst the multitude, he retired to the end of the saloon, and flinging himself upon a seat, sat motionless, buried in profound thought; afraid to seek the rustic, lest in her he should find Jessie St. Leger; or, what he more dreaded, her beautiful cousin: he returned from the masquerade at a very early

hour. As he flung himself upon his pillow, he execrated himself, his temper, and his brother officers, which had all conspired to lead him into such an action. “Where now,” said he to himself, “is all my boasted forbearance? Can I—dare I give Charles advice for *his* conduct, when I cannot regulate my own? How shall I assure my father, in my next letter, that I am still worthy of his regard?—I have meanly fallen into the shallowest snare they could have spread.—I must have been mad with passion, not to have discovered their design. I now know that one intemperance leads to another, and that I am no longer the invulnerable Colville. I shall be ruined with my father—I shall be ruined with Lady Frances. If this was her at the masquerade—good God! how shall I bear hold her!”—His agitations kept him awake half the night; and in the morning he was not

not easy until he wrote, and had confessed his fault to his father, whose forgiveness he begged, assuring him, though in less confident terms than those which he had formerly used, that he would never again be betrayed into such an error.

When he came off guard, and returned home, he found Stanhope just arrived from Blackheath. He told him that he had dismissed his servants, and given up the house; but that he had both them and his landlord to pay, and that as his half-year's allowance was not yet due, he must request Colville to lend him five hundred pounds. Colville thought the sum was rather larger than was necessary to pay a ready-furnished house, of which he had had the possession only two months: but imagining that his friend had something else to discharge which he might wish to conceal, he gave it to him without

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an observation, and Stanhope left him in ecstasies.

Walsh now durst not call on the Earl of Tewksbury, afraid of meeting the mild rebuking eye of Lady Frances. The idea made him miserable. He now, for the first time, thought that the beauties, the attractions of Lady Frances, had made a deeper impression on his heart than a mere admiration, and he gave himself up to unavailing regret.— Rather disgusted at Lord Archibald for having joined in the plot against him, he sent to say, that he would wish to see him. His Lordship came: and Colville then seriously told him, that he was no lover of his sister's, neither had he ever hinted such a thing to herself: that, *were* he disposed to marry, *she* should never be the partner of his choice; for, to speak of her as he thought, he believed her vanity was more hurt than her heart.

heart.—Lord Archibald talked a great deal of her *real* agony—of her unfortunate delusion—of *his* unhappy blindness, in thinking that he saw, in the behaviour of his friend, the tenderest attachment; lamented the hard fate of his dear sister, and concluded with a flourish about pity, generosity, and the manly yielding, of which he knew Colville was possessed.—Walsh replied rather coldly to all this: and Lord Archibald finding his rhetoric ineffectual, and that Walsh was “one “of the knowing ones,” left him with apparent cordiality, but secret hate.

When Colville saw Charles Stanhope alone, he opened his whole heart to him; and, after relating what had passed at the masquerade, requested his advice. Stanhope gave it to him without hesitation. He told him, that it would be madness to see Lady Frances, when the affair was so recent, and offered himself

himself to go to Lord Tewksbury's, and found her and her cousin about it, hoping that they would soon confess, if it was them who had been at the masquerade: and, from their behaviour to him, he thought he could guess what kind of reception they would give his friend. Charles appeared to take so tender an interest in his happiness, and seemed so anxious to find the truth of the affair, and was so eager to throw himself in the way of vindicating and serving his friend, that Colville parted from him with a grateful fondness that he had never before experienced.

"I shall be back in an hour at most," said Charles as he stepped into his own curricle; "I will meet you at three o'clock at the St. James's coffee-house, for I have business there with Lord John Hume. I can just talk to him for a moment, and then

"then take ~~an~~ a saunter with you up St James's-street."

Walsh nodded assent. Stanhope's horses set off in full gallop, and Colville turned down Bond-street, intending to take a stroll in the Park. In his way he was seized by one of his acquaintance, who insisted upon his going to play billiards with him. Careless about it, he consented, and they hurried to Parflow's. On entering the billiard-room, they saw only a young man in the regimentals of the Guards, sitting with a newspaper in his hand: he raised his head on their entrance; and Walsh's companion flying forward, shook him by the hand, and introduced him to Colville by the name of Lord Cantyre. Colville soon learned that he was a Lieutenant in the First, had just come to a very large fortune in Scotland, and was but now returned from thence to join his regiment.

giment. Another gentleman dropping in, relieved Walsh from the billiard-table, and he took a seat beside Lord Cantyre, whose appearance interested him much. His figure was elegantly slender; his features small, but fine; and the expression of his countenance was rather pensive than otherwise: he seemed merely one-and-twenty, and treated Colville in a manner at once respectful and free.

"So I find Charles Stanhope has got a commission," said he, addressing himself to Colville. "I knew him when he came first to town with the Humes—a sweet young man he was then—but Heaven's! what an alteration a few weeks made in him!—If I was a father to-morrow, not a son of mine should associate with any branch of that family, but the eldest—they have utterly ruined Stanhope."

"And

"And how, Sir?" asked Colville with a sneer that Lord Cantyre did not observe.

"What! don't you know that he is spending his fortune faster than his father gives it to him? That he is always losing at the gaming-table, continually spending the evening in riot and drunkenness, and has hired a house on Blackheath, where he keeps one of the most infamous women in town—a Mrs. Somers, who has lived with every profligate of any figure! I pity him from my soul; and only wish that I was intimate enough with him to tell him of his follies. If he had never known the Humes, it might have been better for him: they have introduced him, at his first setting out in life, to the worst fellows of the whole brigade. You know that there are two direct parties of us—those who neither care for character, soul, nor body, but give themselves

" themselves up to every species of vice:—
" and those who know how to mingle reason
" with their pleasure, and who set a proper
" value upon the character of a gentleman,
" a soldier, and a Christian—Stanhope has
" fallen into the way of the former; and the
" latter, as is customary, avoid, rather than
" seek his company. I am really sorry for
" him. I had an opportunity of hearing this
" from a friend of mine, who has a house on
" Blackheath near Stanhope's, and where I
" staid for a month, on my return to London;
" and there I saw enough. Lord John
" Hume, Lord Archibald, Captain Stopford,
" Dormer Trevor, and, in short, all the most
" licentious of the regiment, made it a haunt,
" and him or his mistres entertain'd both
" them and theirs."

"Intolerable!" exclaimed Colville suddenly, unable to bear it any longer. "I am Stanhope's

“ Stanhope’s dearest friend—I know every action of his life; and I would stake my virtue on his rectitude. No, no, Sir! return to the person who fabricated these falsehoods, and imposed them upon you as truths, and tell him, that Walsh Colville is ready to refute them at any time.”—He turned with a bitter scorn from Lord Cantyre, who started up in astonishment.

“ I assure you it *is* truth, Sir; and if Mr. Stanhope is *your* friend, I conjure you, as you value his future happiness, to tell him, that he is becoming ridiculous and abandoned!”

“ You are very *kind*, Sir,” replied Walsh, still more contemptuously smiling, and pressing the spring of his watch as he spoke.—“ I thank you for your information, though it can never be of any use to me. It is

"three o'clock—I have an appointment—
"Goodmorning."—He bowed, and withdrew.

He walked down the street in indignant haste, and, turning into the St. James's, saw his friend's curricle driving down Pall-Mall. He stopped, and Stanhope leaping out, flew with him, not into the coffee-house, but towards the Park.

"Drive my curricle round to Hyde-Park corner," said Charles to his servant; "I shall walk up Constitution Hill."—The servant obeyed, and his master took the arm of Colville.

CHAP. IV.

Ah! the first bringer of unwelcome news
Has but a losing office!—

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN they got into the Mall, Stanhope thought fit to satisfy the breathless impatience of his friend, whose faded cheek and heaving breast evinced how deeply interested he was in the success of his mission. Charles told him, that he found both the young ladies at home, and that they talked of him in terms of detestation—Lady Frances declaring, that she never saw any man half so intoxicated; for, when she passed him to go out, she saw him lying like a beast on a seat, actually senseless with ebriety. He added, that she

G 2

was

was so vehement in her abuse of him, that though he defended him, he was provoked to continue it. Insulted, he said, at her daring to censure his friend's actions so freely, and so severely, he told her that Walsh would have little to lament in losing the good opinion of one that was to be kept on such difficult terms.

" My God! you have ruined me for ever!" exclaimed Colville in an agony. " O! Stanhope, why did you say so? She will think that it was my sentiment, not yours; and she will detest me."

" No, that she can't," returned Stanhope; " for I told her, that if *I* was in your situation, I should have little to lament in losing the good opinion of one who required it to be kept on such hard terms.—" O! she could never think that."

" You

" You are sure of it, Charles?" asked Colville in a faltering voice.

" Yes, I am very sure. My advice to you
" is this—let me visit her alone for two or
" three times, and I will express your sorrow
" for your error in such a manner, that I am
" confident she must have a heart not worth
" caring for if she does not forgive you."

Colville sighed. He lamented his imprudence; vowed that he would never offend again in like manner; and at length, having almost wearied Stanhope with his expressions of regret, he parted from him, and returned home to brood over, in silent melancholy, the unhappy consequences of his first deviation from propriety. The idea of Lord Cantyre and his conversation shot across his mind, and raised in his breast the bitterest dislike, and the most scornful disdain. He

wondered at his mean slander of one like his Stanhope, whose only fault, in his eyes, was a too great freedom of manners. He had seen him intoxicated not unfrequently, and had heard him exclaim against that rigidity of conduct which he had adopted; but this he imputed to the levity of his disposition, not to the badness of his heart, and thought that he still beheld in him the Stanhope once so dear to him.

Charles, every visit that he paid to Lord Tewksbury's, returned with additional food for chagrin: he still represented Lady Frances as inflexible; and told him frankly, that he thought it was an impossibility for him to gain her affections.—“Indeed,” added he, “I believe they are already gone; for, when I was introduced into the drawing-room, I found her in close conversation with Bob Ker, Lord—What the devil is his name?

" name?—Lord Cantyre; and, on my entrance, she took out of his hand a miniature that I could see was drawn for himself, and put it in her pocket with a smile of delight: he withdrew instantly."

Colville heard this with agonizing despair: he could not speak for some moments; at length, taking the hand of Charles, he said—
" Stanhope! I have then nothing to hope?
" and the lovely Frances will be the wife of
" one I hate from my soul!"

The information that Stanhope had given Colville was literally true, but the picture was designed for Miss St. Leger, and was only entrusted to Lady Frances to give to Jessie on her return from a morning ride, as she was the engaged wife of the young Lord. At the moment, this circumstance gave rise to these suspicions in the breast of Stanhope;

but having impudence enough to ask for whom the portrait was intended, he was told by her Ladyship what he now concealed from his unhappy friend.

In the deepest despondence Walsh retired to his own room, execrating in his heart the hour that first brought him to London.— Every return of Stanhope from the house of Lord Tewksbury added fresh force to his grief. His father had written to him in kind forgiveness, praising his candour, and gently rebuking him for that confidence which he had entertained so lately of himself. Happy in being reinstated in the opinion of his father, he sighed to regain also that of Lady Frances; and, after long struggling with himself, he at length resolved to write to her. Stanhope at that time was upon the Knightsbridge duty; and Colville, unwilling to delay his letter, sent it off, without waiting for

for his friend's advice—it contained these words :

“ The warm esteem that I have ever felt
“ for your family, and the particular friend-
“ ship that I have entertained for yourself,
“ will, I trust, apologize to your Ladyship
“ for the liberty I take in addressing you.
“ After the conversation of the morning of
“ the 15th, and the rencontre of its evening,
“ I conceive myself bound to explain, to
“ confess my conduct. That I have erred,
“ I cannot deny: but that I was betrayed
“ into it, I will still aver—Believe me,
“ Lady Frances, that I never before so far
“ degraded myself; nor will I ever again.
“ Experience has taught me to avoid such
“ actions for the future, by shewing me, that
“ in one point I *am* vulnerable. It shall
“ now be my constant study to meliorate the
“ impassioned warmth of my temper—my
“ wild

“ wild intemperate folly! which alone has
“ seduced me into such degradation: and,
“ should I ever be admitted to your pre-
“ sence again—should I ever receive your
“ forgiveness, and recover your esteem, I
“ will ever evince to you, by the purity and
“ regularity of my conduct, that you have
“ not bestowed your goodness on one totally
“ unworthy.

“ I remain, Madam,
“ Your Ladyship’s sincerest friend,
“ WALSH COLVILLE.”

He waited the return of his servant with an anxiety impossible to be described; and when he received a note from his hands, he flung himself upon a seat in a tremulous agitation, which for some time prevented him from opening it;—at last breaking the seal, he read the following:

“ Apo-

" Apologies to me, Sir, are totally unnecessary : I am rather surprised that you should attempt making *any*. You know that I was never made acquainted with your particular friendship for me ; and I have therefore ever considered you as a mere visitor, not as a friend whose actions I had a right to scrutinize and condemn. You had an opportunity of becoming more intimate at my father's, but you disdained it, and the *respectable* family of the Cheviots was preferred to that of the Tewkburys. Lady Lucy certainly *has* her attractions, but I am sorry they were found so powerful with the son of the friend of my father. Probably you have been alarmed, lest I should be cruel enough to publish your conduct to the Earl, and by that means render it too certain that Lord Sussex should hear of it ; but be assured I neither have, nor will. I have *still* too much

“ much regard remaining for the Walsh Col-
“ ville I was first introduced to, to do any
“ thing to injure he who has degraded him
“ for ever. Farther explanations I do not
“ require: I have heard every thing that can
“ sink you in my esteem, and you can say
“ nothing to extenuate it. *Your wild intem-
“ perate folly!*—O shame, Sir!—give it a
“ truer name, and call it *vice*.

“ FRANCES SURRY.”

Colville clasped his hands in an agony of despair, and, flinging down the paper, paced the room with hurried steps:—he stopped—looked up to Heaven with a kind of wild reproach, and then striking his forehead, sunk once more on a chair.—“ Am I then so black, so wicked, so *totally* abandoned!” exclaimed he in a transport of anguish.—“ Am I fallen so low from what I was—has one action rendered me so horrible that

“ Frances

" Frances sees me laden with vice! I must
" have forgot—I must—sure I have acted
" some dreadful deed in my madness, and
" she now reproaches me with it. Good
" God! what will become of me? I have
" lost her esteem—lost my own—and my fa-
" ther will despise me!"

Unconscious of what he did, he snatched up his hat, and rushing out of the house, flew furiously through the streets, till he found himself at the gate of Surry House.— He now, for the first time, recollect ed where he was, and casting an agonized look on the windows, caught a glimpse of Lady Frances as she passed one of them hastily.—“ By hea-
“ ven and earth, 'tis her!” cried Walsh in a voice of terrifying distress, at the same time turning away as if overwhelmed with shame.—“ Did she know that *I* was here,
“ that

“ that she averted her lovely face as she
“ passed? O! what have I lost to myself!—
“ And yet—O horror! is she not engaged
“ to this Cantyre?”

Full of torture and despondence, he retrud his former steps, and wandered into St. James's Park: he was accosted by Lord Archibald Hume and Captain Stopford, who wanted him to take a saunter with them through the palace, and up the street; but eager to escape from conversation, and abhorring the very sound of Lady Lucy's name, he said he wished to look at the papers, and rushed into the coffee-house. It was empty, and he flung himself upon a seat. Cantyre seemed to haunt him like his evil genius, for he was then just come off guard to his breakfast, and entered the room. He sat down beside him, and made the usual enquiries

quiries of the morning. Colville answered coldly, and turned round with a haughty resentment.

“ I have to beg your pardon,” said Lord Cantyre with a mild condescension, which at another time, and from another man, would have charmed Colville, “ for the liberty I took some time ago in talking so freely of your friend. And at the same time I must beseech you will not consider me impertinently intrusive, if I again trouble you with my advice in regard to yourself.”

“ *Your* advice, Sir!” exclaimed Walsh, fiercely turning upon him, and bending his brows. “ *Your* advice!” and again he flung his head away with an air of scorn.

Cantyre took his hand, and held it with a kind of gentle force.—“ I esteem you,
“ Colville,

“ Colville, from my soul! I was attracted
“ by your appearance and manners the first
“ time I saw you—I felt the strong interest
“ of friendship, and I flattered myself that
“ I should find in you one who would console
“ me for the loss of the dearest of fathers.”—
His eye grew more lucid as he spoke; he
felt it, and blushed.

Colville’s eyes gradually subsided from
their impetuous impatience into a sort of
softened gaze, and Cantyre continued:

“ Let me beg of you to permit me to in-
“ troduce you more intimately to Wil-
“ liam Greville, Captain Vavasour, Charles
“ Loftus, Colonel Grenard, and young Lord
“ Hastings, they are all men of the highest
“ reputation, and most elegant minds: you
“ will be charmed with them; and will soon
“ find that those *boys*, as the Humes call
“ them,

" them, who are all hypocrisy and secret
" mischief, are really abundant in every
" virtue that dignifies human nature. I find
" that your line of acquaintance is in the
" same set with that of Stanhope's, and you
" will be ruined. Bunbury has lamented it
" to me a thousand times; he says that you
" are blind, that you are squandering your
" fortune upon a parcel of reprobates, and a
" false friend, who will, like the viper, poison
" the bosom that fosters him. It is with
" pain I see you already losing some of that
" dignity and self-command I was told you
" formerly possessed. You have very lately
" acted in a very improper manner, and if
" you had any reflection, you would see that
" Lord Archibald Hume was interested in
" your misconduct: he seeks to entrap you
" into a marriage with his sister, and hoped
" to take advantage of your insensible mo-

"ments, to work out his purpose. I would
"not have attacked you again, Colville,
"after the severe rebuff I received from
"you, had I not been prevailed on by a
"lady who I love more than life; and who
"urged me, from the esteem she entertained
"for you, to attempt the advising of you."

"A lady, Sir!" echoed Colville, starting up, while rage blazed in his eyes. "Go tell that lady, that I will hear *every thing* from her, but nothing from her lover, who I hate, because he is so——"—Thus speaking, he tore his hand from the astonished Cantyre, and rushed out of the apartment.

Cut to the soul with this new insult from Lord Cantyre, whose lady he imagined to be Frances, instead of Jeffie, he vowed in his heart eternal enmity to him; and returned

turned home in a state of mind far different from the sweet tranquillity he was once accustomed to.

In a day or two afterwards, Stanhope returned from Knightsbridge; and, after the first salutations were over, he enquired about Lady Frances Surry. Colville related all that had passed, and then looked at his friend as if for comfort. Stanhope was silent.

"Ah, Charles!" cried Walsh, "if you loved as tenderly as I do, you would try to console me—you would give me some hope."

"If I loved?" re-echoed the other. "I do, and madly!"

Colville started.

Stanhope blushed, and falteringly continued.—“ I am in love with one whom you “ have never seen ; but who, if you did, you “ would say was an angel. She is unfor- “ tunate, and therefore claims my enthusiastic “ fondness. Her story makes out Lord Can- “ tyre, your hated rival, a villain !”

“ Lord Cantyre !” exclaimed Colville.—
“ Tell it me, dear Stanhope ?”

Charles looked down, and began.—“ You “ remember, about three weeks ago, that I “ went down with a party of our officers to “ see the launch of the Ville de Paris at “ Chatham. At the inn where we stopped “ was this Cantyre. We asked him to sup “ with us, and he consented. While we “ were at table, the conversation turned “ upon some reports in town ; and to settle a “ difference in opinion between Cantyre and
“ Dormer

“ Dormer Trevor, I went to my room to
“ bring from thence one of your letters
“ which mentioned the rumour. In passing
“ by the door of Cantyre’s apartment, I
“ heard a loud sobbing; curiosity tempted
“ me to listen, and I then heard distinctly
“ the voice of a female, as if uttering some
“ mournful ejaculations. I tapped at the
“ door, for I was fired to see who it was,
“ that in Lord Cantyre’s rooms appeared in
“ such grief; no one spoke, and I entered
“ without further ceremony. A beautiful
“ woman in a riding habit, sat at one end of
“ the room, whose face was hid by a hand-
“ kerchief, on which she wept: she turned
“ from me as I approached, and putting me
“ off with her hand—‘ Begone, Sir, I will
“ never see you more—you have betrayed
“ the confidence that I reposed in you; you
“ have taken me from my friends, and now
“ insult me with the basest offers.—O, my

“ God! send me but some friend to release
“ me from the tyranny of Cantyre!—I
“ took her hand.—‘ Dear madam,’ said I,
“ ‘ Lord Cantyre is not here—I am a
“ stranger, but I will serve you to the ut-
“ most of my power.’—She turned towards
“ me in amaze, and as her handkerchief
“ dropt down, discovered a face so lovely,
“ that—in short, Colville, I was heartless in
“ an instant. She then begged me to protect
“ her, telling me in few, but pathetic words,
“ to the truth of which her tears bore wit-
“ ness, that she was of an elegant family in
“ Scotland—that her hand was going to be
“ given to a man she hated; when she saw
“ Lord Cantyre, he proposed for her, in
“ vain, and then gained her consent to an
“ elopement and union in England—that
“ when he had brought her to Chatham, on
“ some pretence or other, he insulted her
“ with the grossest proposals, and finally told
“ her,

" her, that she must either return to her
" friends, who, after so long an absence,
" would never believe her innocent, or sur-
" render her virtue to him ; he cruelly re-
" proached her for her confidence in him,
" and said, he was a fortunate man in es-
" caping the chains of matrimony :—she
" added, that though she had not a gu-
" nea in the world, she was resolved to
" leave him, and throw herself upon Pro-
" vidence. Her distress interested me, and
" I promised, if she would put herself under
" my protection, I would immediately carry
" her to a respectable family in town : she
" yielded, and having ordered a chaise, I
" discharged my bill at the inn, and escaped
" unobserved and unmiffed ; as my compa-
" nions were all too much inebriated to
" think of any thing but themselves. As we
" rode together, I mentioned the name of
" the Duchess of Cheviot, as the person

“ with whom I meant to place her ; but El-
“ mira, for that is her name, turned pale,
“ and begged me to leave her to her own
“ sufferings, as the Duchess was the mother
“ of him, she was to have been united to,
“ and rather than go into the family of the
“ Marquis of Lomond, she would perish.
“ I was perplexed, and after much confide-
“ ration, I took her to my house on Black-
“ Heath, where she remained until your lec-
“ ture ; and I then removed her to lodgings
“ in Albemarle-street, for which reason I
“ borrowed of you so large a sum of mo-
“ ney. She is for ever petitioning me to
“ send her back to her parents, but I can-
“ not—I have told her, that I have written
“ to them, and she believes that they have
“ never answered my letters. She calls me
“ her Bevil—I would to God, that she would
“ be my Indiana ! and I think—I hope I
“ do not flatter myself—that my attentions,
“ my

" my unpresuming regards, have won much
" upon her affections. Cantyre is spoken
" of with less bitterness, but more con-
" tempt; and when she talks of leaving me,
" I see the sweet tears of regret in her
" eye.—There is one thing, for which I
" must beg you to pardon me—that is, con-
" cealing it so long, but I was afraid your
" heart would yield to her charms, for
" I did not *then* know, that you were at-
" tached to Lady Frances Surry:—And
" another thing, I have taken the liberty of
" calling her Mrs. Colville, and have men-
" tioned her as the widow of your cousin
" Harry, who fell on the Continent. I,
" therefore, visit her as your friend, and en-
" treat that you will entertain her like your
" cousin, to give her every respectability,
" and to take away any speck that might fall
" upon her character."

Stanhope

Stanhope ceased—and Colville paused in thought for a moment: he felt something unpleasant in the imposition, but he restrained from saying so, as he saw it would hurt the feelings of his friend, and only praised his conduct, and execrated that of Lord Cantyre, whose eagerness to speak of Stanhope, now accounted for, in a way not very creditable to himself. Walsh then begged to be introduced to her, and Stanhope wrote a note to Mrs. Colville to say, that they would dine with her that day. Colville did not see it,

At five o'clock they waited on the fair unfortunate: her apartments were elegant, and fitted up with magnificence. Walsh smiled, and thought his friend's generosity almost amounted to prodigality. Elmira rose on their approach: her dress was fashionable, her figure fine; her features were beautiful, her eyes

eyes black and radiant, but not softly expressive, as Walsh expected to have found them; her air bespoke a person accustomed to elegant company, and her address was pleasing. In the evening she sang and touched the piano, and enlivened the conversation, with brilliant flashes of wit and vivacity. Colville saw in her liveliness, a good omen for his friend, and he left her after supper, much gratified and much interested. Stanhope talked of her like a lover—and Walsh envied him his situation; he sighed when he thought of Lady Frances—sighed, and thought of her again.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

— You have undone me ;
You have made shipwreck of my peace among you,
My happiness and honour ; and I now
Roam the detested world, a careless wretch !

THOMSON.

THOUGH Colville still retained a strong esteem for Lord Archibald Hume, yet he could not forget his joining in the set against him, and had told him so with a degree of warmth, almost bordering on displeasure.

Archibald excused himself by saying, that he was provoked at his denying having a tenderness for Lady Lucy, as he at that time firmly believed he had, and therefore did it to punish

nish him. He promised as all that was over, he would never do such an action again, and Walsh forgot it.

The Duchess of Cheviot seemed now to have taken up the affair; she wrote repeatedly to Colville, inviting him to the house with more than usual earnestness, and when he did come, Lady Lucy appeared in the deepest affliction, and retiring frequently, as if to weep, gave her mother opportunities of imploring Walsh to compassionate her child. She even shed tears as she spoke, so well did she know the art of dissembling, and lamented the cruelty of her situation, that obliged her to make the first advances for her daughter. But Colville was not to be talked out of his happiness to gratify the ambition of the mother, and the avarice of the child: he regarded it with a kind of scornful resentment, but that

re-

resentment was only felt for Lady Lucy, as he was too ignorant of artifice to imagine that the feelings of the Duchess were assumed. He spoke to her Grace with mildness, thanking her for her good opinion, and that of her daughter's; but at the same time adding, that it was an alliance his father never would consent to, neither did he wish he should—for to speak with frankness, and to put a stop to any farther entreaties, his heart was engaged irrecoverably. The Duchess acquiesced in silent dignity, and he quitted her.

A few days after brought him a kind note from the Earl of Tewksbury (who was quite ignorant of the masquerade affair) reproaching him for his neglect, and reminding him of what he owed to the friend of his father. He rallied him upon his want of gallantry to his daughter, in a manner that gave Colville

the

the bitterest pain : the note contained a desire for him to dine with him next week ; Walsh was tempted to accept it, but he checked the thought, and only resolved on going immediately to thank the Earl for his invitation, but to decline it. To see Lady Frances again, if, but for a moment, was a hope too dear to be relinquished, and though he would not intrude his society upon her for a whole day, yet he thought his company for an instant, could not be *very* hateful. Full of agitation, love, and dread, he drove to Surry-house, and was led up into the drawing-room ; he found there only Lady Frances. She rose in confusion, and hastily putting a letter into her pocket, told him she would send her father directly. Walsh caught her hand, it trembled, and her soft eyes were drowned in tears ; she strove to hide them in vain—they rolled down her cheek, and Colville asked her in an imploring manner, if

she

she would forgive and forget his late conduct. She tried to appear unconcerned, and coldly answered, that he knew her sentiments already, and therefore insulted her now, by wishing her to change them.

Walsh's fine face took a deeper colour as she replied to him, and a spirited lustre animated his eye.—“I am unconscious, Madam, “of having done any thing so very wicked as “to be considered unpardonable: surely *one* “indiscretion is not to stamp me with *every* “vice?—I confess that I have been intemperate, but I should hope that the most heartfelt contrition and shame would atone “for it.”

“O, were that all!” cried Lady Frances, interrupting him, “I could forgive it easily; “but it is not the wine you drank, Sir, it “is the conversation that occasioned it—the
“actions

"actions which followed it—the vice that you
"are now revelling in.—Yes, Sir, you *may*
"blush!—Your own heart must point out
"my meaning too plainly.—I did esteem
"you—once I did—tenderly—too"—She
burst into tears as she spoke, and recollect-
ing her imprudent confession, broke from
him.

Colville had blushed, and did still, but it was the blush of manly indignation at imputed faults: he scrupled not to think that he was meanly traduced by Lord Cantyre; for Lord Cantyre, he was too sure, was her lover. Her last words had escaped his ear, or perhaps *one* ray of hope might have shot across his mind. Stupefied with astonishment, he was insensible to the entrance of any one, till he found his hand within that of Lord Tewksbury's.

The Earl expressed real concern to see him so altered, for indeed the agitation of Colville's mind, since the night of the masquerade, had so preyed upon his health, that he had lost his colour, his smiles, and his dress was neglected. This alteration had gone to the heart of Frances, for she thought it the offspring of licentiousness, not of sorrow. The Earl felt it otherwise: he tenderly questioned his young friend about his state of mind, convinced from his appearance that nothing but mental distress could have made so melancholy a change.

Walsh replied to his questions with a kind of haughty reserve, struggling with his natural sweet frankness, for he was too much offended at the behaviour of Lady Frances to behave to her father with the kindness he claimed. He made his excuse in a few words, pleading an unpleasant nervous disorder

order as an apology, which he said rendered him fit company for none but himself.

The dejection with which he spoke affected Lord Tewksbury; he was pressing in his invitation, but Walsh steadily refused it, and departed, leaving his kindest compliments to Jessie St. Leger. In the hall he passed Lord Cantyre, who was just come in; the latter accosted him with friendly civility, but Walsh just touched his hat, and brushed past him, firmly resolved to see Lady Frances no more; he flung himself into his vis-à-vis, and proceeded home, ruminating with warm resentment upon the unforgiving tendency of her temper, and decidedly believing that she abhorred him, and had sought this opportunity to be rid of the importunities of a love that she probably saw he felt for her.—“But I will feel it no longer!” said he to himself with sullen anger: “a heart

"that is not to be softened by contrition,
"ought not to be valued.—Let her marry
"this Cantyre—let her hate me.—I hate
"her—I hate him—I detest the whole
"world!"—He spoke this in one of those
moments which those who have loved
have sometimes experienced. His soul was
still madly attached; it was full of raised
pride, jealousy, scorn, despair, and at the
instant he *did* abhor every being around
him, but his fury was too soon over. By
the time he reached home his resentment
was all flown, and nothing remained but
the most miserable despondence, and the
maddest love—Lady Frances was no longer
cruel—she was just, and she was adored.

Stanhope brought with him, when he re-
turned, Lord Archibald Hume, and Cap-
tain Stopford.—Walsh disliked Stopford from
his soul, but Stanhope appeared to like him,
and

and he concealed his disgust. They dined together in perfect good humour, and in the course of conversation Lord Archibald mentioned a family that had just arrived in town from Bath, to whom he wished to introduce Stanhope and Colville, as they were well acquainted with the mother and sister of the former, having left them at Bath when they quitted it.

" You will like them much, Walsh," said he ; " the family consists of four girls, and their widow-mother; their names are Bruton.—I am sure their society would captivate you—so lively, so accomplished, so intelligent!—I have spoken a great deal about you to them—nay indeed, I have promised Charlotte that I would introduce you at the house.—Have you any objection to call on them with me?"

Colville answered as carelessly as Lord Archibald appeared to speak—saying, he *could* have no objection.

"Well then, we will all go on Wednesday," cried his Lordship.—"You know them, Stopford."

Stopford smiled, and nodded an assent, and they were talked of no more.

On the appointed day, the young men met at the house of Colville; he was just come from the Parade, and would have changed his cloaths, but Archibald told him, that scarlet was an attractive colour, and he should not put it off. Walsh was indifferent about it, and complied, unconscious of their reason. He was conducted by them to Bennett-street, and was introduced to the family. Mrs. Bruton was a very fine woman, though turned

turned of forty, and her daughters were all beautiful. They were drest in the height of fashion; but Walsh turned from the gay Charlotte with a sigh, as he recollect^{ed} the chaste elegance of Lady Frances, whose pure taste despised a fashion that rejected modesty. The exposed bosoms of the Brutons, the smart dressed ankles which they continued occasionally to display, disgusted and did not attract him. Their carriage was waiting to take them to Hyde-park, and Lord Archibald Hume offered to attend them thither. Mrs. Bruton accepted their company, on condition they returned to dinner, and Colville, with the rest, complied. Stanhope wished to ride; and when his friends and the young ladies got into the carriage, he went home for his horse and servant, telling them, that he should see them as he rode. After one whirl round the ring, the ladies proposed getting out, and walking

up the Park. The silk stocking and delicate ancle of Charlotte was seen often.—Walsh smiled at the ridiculous vanity which prompted the display, and severely condemned the lightness of her conduct—he was out of humour with every thing—he recollect^{ed} it, and blaming his impatient temper, tried to dissipate his moody humour, by listening to the lively fallies of his companions. Stanhope flew past them on full gallop, but he only bowed.

“ Unfeeling puppy!” cried Hume, “ when so much beauty is with us!”

“ So much beauty indeed!” returned Colville, forcing a smile.—He raised his eyes, as he turned off his head from Lord Archibald, and they met those of Lady Frances Surry, and Jeffie St. Leger. Colville, while a blush of joyful love shot over his cheek, touched

touched his hat. Her ladyship flung away her head with a disdainful haste, and rushed forward without noticing him.—Colville was petrified—this was beyond his fears: he followed her with his eyes, till the voice of Stopford, in a tone a little louder than the big bell of Oxford, aroused him.

“ I’ll be damned if I hav’n’t been tugging
“ and shouting for this hour,” cried he, “ and
“ could not get you to hear or feel!”

“ What did you want, Sir?” — asked
Walsh.

“ Only to know if that was not Lady
“ Frances Surry who passed us just now,
“ with Hastings and Loftus?”

“ Yes, Sir, it was.”

“ It

"It was.—O! hah, hah! hum"—he bit his lip to hide a laugh, and walked on in silence.

He was now inattentive to the remarks of Charlotte Bruton; and she finding her artillery all thrown away, put her arm through that of Stopford's, and attacked him. Mrs. Bruton was the first to mention home, and Walsh, who was sick of the Park since Frances had left it, leaped into the carriage with joy.

Before dinner was served, Stanhope joined them. He asked Walsh if he had spoken to Lady Frances. Walsh in a low tone mentioned what had passed.

Charles bit his lip in thoughtful silence—
"Very odd indeed!" cried he; "I'll be
"cursed if this Cartyre has not been tell-
"ing

"ing some hellish falsehood of you to her, or
"she never would have been so insolently
"rude.—I bowed to her, and she and her
"whole party returned it."

Walsh sighed—" You are a happy fellow,
" Stanhope!"

Stanhope smiled, and returned to Louisa Bruton. The day passed away in romping and merriment; and though Colville found himself often called upon by Charlotte to defend her from the hands of Stopford, whose romping went something beyond innocent vivacity, yet he still preserved his gravity, and Charlotte, at length gave him up in disgust. The arrival of his servants with his vis-à-vis released him from the pain he suffered in concealing the agony of his feelings. He parted from his friends with more joy than he expressed concern, and returned with

Stan-

Stanhope to their house, conjecturing, in a frantic kind of despair, the reason of Lady Frances's behaviour.

In the morning, when he came down to breakfast, he found upon the table a note, which the servant had laid for his perusal. He tore it hastily open, for the hand was that of the fair Surry's—and read these words:

“ Your insolence in bowing to me this morning has compleated my aversion to you.—It is an insult that I can never forgive, and therefore I *insist* that you never more appear at Surry-house, or I shall then be obliged to publish your conduct to the Earl, that *he* may forbid your visits for ever.

“ FRANCES SURRY.”

It was dated late in the evening of the preceding day. Colville read it over a thousand times, doubting his senses; at length convinced of the reality of what it contained, he flung it with fury across the table to Stanhope, haughtily saying, "She is below my "regard!"

"Below your regard, indeed!" returned Stanhope, tearing the note, as he finished reading it, "despicable, affected girl!— "write to her, Colville, and say you acquiesce "with pleasure—do not let her enjoy her "imaginary triumph."

Colville caught up a pen, and in the violence of the moment wrote this billet:

"Walsh Colville with pleasure obeys the
"command of Lady Frances Surrey, whose
"character, he is sorry to say, he had widely
"mistaken

"mistaken—But her ladyship has been kind enough to withdraw the veil that concealed her, and he now leaves her with rapture, to hypocrisy, and Lord Cantyre—for they are one."

Stanhope sealed this with joyful approbation, and the servant was sent with it immediately. Colville stormed, raved—execrated her—the sex—the world—and lamented his own hastiness—wished he had not written the letter, and then again dismissed a repentance, which Stanhope assured him was a weakness. In this state he traversed the room, till the return of his servant awakened all his expectations.—“Now for her answer!” cried Charles; as he tore open the wafer, his friend’s letter fell to the ground—it was unopened—the cover was a blank, and directed, not by the hand of Lady Frances, but by that of her woman.

“By

" By heaven ! this is too much—this is not
" to be forgiven !" exclaimed Colville, biting
his lips with a madman's rage, " by all the
powers of——." He stopped, and flung him-
self exhausted upon a seat, and melted into
tears. He covered his face with his hands,
while his eyes rained down in impetuous
torrents all the agony of his heart.

Stanhope rose in agitation, and catching
his hand—" O Colville!"—the door opened
while he was speaking, and Lord John Hume
entered. Walsh started up when he saw him,
and abruptly quitted the room. Lord John
came to ask Stanhope to meet him at a public
dinner, and was just persuading him to it,
when Colville, who had dashed away his
tears with proud disdain, re-entered. Lord
John attacked *him*, and was rather surprised
to find him acquiesce, even more readily
than Charles. The matter settled, his Lord-
ship

ship carried them both out, to lounge away an hour in the Park.

Having ordered their horses, they mounted them, and rode till it was time to return home to dress. Colville's soul was wound up to the highest pitch of resentment, and he flew to the Thatched-house Tavern at seven o'clock, with a firm resolution of drowning his anguish in floods of wine. The party that met there were all young men of Lord John Hume's acquaintance, and were, in fact, made up of all the profligates in fashionable life. These, aided by his own furious passion, soon rendered him frantically intoxicated, and he joined with eagerness a set of the party, who persuaded him to accompany them to an adjacent gambling-house, where he soon found himself debtor to Lord John Hume above two thousand pounds. Insensible of the consequences of

his

his imprudence, he leaped into his carriage with Stanhope, and driving to his own house, flung himself on his pillow without a thought. In the morning, Hume called for payment of this *honourable* debt, accompanied by Dormer Trevor, who had a claim of the same kind, for one thousand pounds, on Charles Stanhope. The young men, when they met them, were appalled: they faintly remembered something of the preceding evening; but it was so little, that they almost doubted the justice of their demand. At last, Lord John produced a paper that Colville really had written, acknowledging the debt, and he therefore attested to its reality. Walsh had not five hundred pounds in his hands; Stanhope had not as many shillings: they now looked on one another in mute despair. Lord John grew urgent, and Colville recovered himself.—“ An affair “ like this,” said he, “ could not have hap-

“ pened at a more unfortunate time—it finds
“ me and Stanhope totally unprovided; but
“ if you are not under an immediate neces-
“ sity for what was not yours till last night, I
“ will write to my father, and entreat *him* to
“ pay it—I am unable to do it.—An esta-
“ blishment of five thousand a year will not
“ afford two thousand a night.”

“ As to me,” cried Stanhope, his eyes full
of angry despair, “ I’ll be cursed if I know
“ what to do!—Sir William will see me
“ damned before he’ll discharge it.—By
“ heaven, ’twas shameful to make us play
“ when we were drunk.—I did not think,
“ Hume, that *you* would have been so unge-
“ nerous.”

Hume laughed like a brute, and swore by
his Maker, “ he was dead drunk too, but that
“ Fortune played for him, and did it very
“ kindly,

"kindly, as he was damnably in want of
"cash."

Dormer Trevor was insolently importunate. Stanhope was in agonies, till Colville at length promised to assist him, and the harpies left them.

The situation of Walsh can only be imagined, not described. He found himself surrounded by the blackest prospects, which his own rashness had plunged him into; and saw no hope but in throwing himself on the pity of his father, whose esteem he must then for ever lose. While he was silently revolving these maddening thoughts, Charles was raving about the room like a maniac, cursing London, and all its inhabitants—solemnly forswearing dice, cards, friends, and all society.

When the tempest had a little subsided, these imprudent friends endeavoured to console each other. Stanhope was easily appeased, for Colville promised to give him the money, if he could get it from his father, as it was as easy to ask for three as for two thousand :—“ If Lord Sussex refuses ‘ me,’ ” said Walsh to Stanhope, “ you must ‘ be contented to be ruined with me.’ ”

Stanhope assented with a loud sigh—Colville sighed too, and it was drawn from a breaking heart. He now wondered at his foolish mode of revenging himself for the injustice of Lady Frances, by giving her fresh cause to despise him; and bitterly reproached himself for the dangerous licence that he had of late given to his passions. After long disputing with his own heart, he at last seized a pen, and wrote to his father. His letter contained a full avowal of his in-

dif-

discretion—he severely condemned himself, and imploring his father to pardon him, solemnly vowed that nothing should again plunge him into such guilt.—The style of the epistle was too miserably despondent, too ingenuous, too sincerely explicit, to be mistaken for the assumed repentance of one lost to virtue. He had wrote of every thing with candour, only stifling a confession of his insulted love, though by so doing he rendered his conduct less excusable. The tumults of his mind were too much for a frame already exhausted by mental suffering; and the second day after this letter was dispatched, saw him confined to his bed in a raging fever.

While in this state, the frequent enquiries of Lord Cantyre affected him sensibly—he felt disposed to be grateful for such attention—he wished he could have reason to like

him ; for though he was his rival—though he had traduced his friend, yet there was a something so insinuatingly gentle in his manners, that Colville would have given worlds to have found in him a heart congenially good ; but he dismissed the idea with a sigh, and tried to hate him more, because he was his rival, and a hypocrite.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

—'Tis ever thus
With noble minds, if chance they slide to folly,
Remorse stings deeper, and relentless conscience
Pours more of gall into the bitter cup
Of their severe repentance.

MASON.

STANHOPE's duty had increased much since the illness of Colville, and it prevented him from spending much time with his friend. Walsh regretted his absence, but appeared not to do so, fearful of increasing the concern of Charles. The Humes sometimes dropped in upon him, but it was seldom. The only one who sat unwearied by his bedside was a young ensign of the same regiment, of whom before he had scarcely

ever taken any notice. Bunbury, for that was his name, was handsome in his person, and playful in his manners; in the whim of the moment he would call himself a wit, and style his hair auburn, although he knew that it was more like red—but he laughed when he said it, like Marmontel's Lindor; and though he was often called a noisy boy by his elders, yet they smiled at his tricks, and sometimes joined in them.—He often got into scrapes through his lively spirits; but he was so good-humoured, and so friendly, that there was not a soul worth any thing in the brigade who would not exert the utmost of his power to assist him out of them. Though in the constant habit of associating with the *sober* set, yet he occasionally mixed with the *riotous*, but did it only for the sake of going a *quizzing* with them, as he called it, or of *kicking up a row*. Colville had met him sometimes in these parties, and Bunbury now took

took advantage of that knowledge, to be for ever with him. Colville received him every succeeding day with more pleasure; for Bunbury really possessed an excellent understanding, and could, when he pleased, be agreeably serious. He won much upon the affections of the unhappy Colville, who, at the expiration of six days, received the following letter from his father:

“ If you could see the agonies of your miserable parent at this moment, you would, “ I trust, shudder at what you have done. “ Your letter found me on a sick bed, and “ until to-day I have neither had strength “ nor inclination to reply to it. You ask “ me to forgive you—I do from my soul— “ but that forgiveness shall only remain while “ your conduct deserves it.—O, my dear “ boy! why did you ever leave me?—Why “ did you rush, falsely confident, into snares
“ which

“ which I knew must entrap you?—I foresaw
“ this, yet I consented, and it is I who am
“ to blame.—Inclosed is an order on my
“ banker for the sum you require. Let it
“ be the last of the *kind* I am ever to pay
“ for you—it *shall* be the last—for if, after
“ the protestations you have made, you again
“ suffer yourself to be led into such vicious
“ imprudence, I can never consent to look
“ upon you as my son. I am ashamed to
“ think that Charles Stanhope has conducted
“ himself *well*, comparatively with my Walsh.
“ Lord Tewksbury tells me, that you are
“ seldom at his house, but often at that of the
“ Cheviots—Did I not warn you against
“ this?—You now find the consequences of
“ such connections—this play debt is to Lord
“ John, but still I will pardon you.—That
“ manly ingenuousness so dear to me, I still
“ find in your letters—and I am comforted
“ with the reflection.—For God’s sake! for
“ your

" for your father's sake ! be more careful in
" your conduct.—Give me not cause to throw
" you from me for ever ! I *had* hoped, that
" your behaviour would have been sufficiently
" exemplary, to have justified me in asking
" for you the hand of Lady Frances Surry—
" but that is done away at present.—*She* is
" too amiable, too strict in her ideas of good-
" ness, to unite herself to one who gives
" way to every temptation of vice ! I would
" write more, but I cannot. I am but just
" recovering from a severe attack of my
" disorder, and I am too weak to add
" more, than that I am still your affectionate
" father,

" SUSSEX."

Walsh received this note as he lay on the sofa in his drawing-room, where he was for the first time since his illness. The kindness of his father drew from him tears of sincere

gra-

gratitude. Stanhope was lolling over the breakfast table, and sat gazing on his friend with an enquiring eye, when Colville pressing the paper to his lips, in a transport of joy, exclaimed—"O, Charles, I am for—" given!"

Charles started up.—"Has he sent the "money?"

Colville put the draft into his hand, and Stanhope glancing his eye upon the figures of 3,000*l.* set up a shout of delight. The pleasure of Charles was as boisterous as his grief—he bounced backwards and forwards—flew to his friend—shook him by the hand—congratulated him on having so good a father—and then snatching up his hat, darted out of the room with the swiftness of a rocket, to get the bill changed into cash.

While

While he was gone, Bunbury entered. Colville read him his father's letter—for in the fullness of his heart, he would have done such a thing even to Cantyre.

Bunbury was sincere in his congratulations.—“Upon my soul!” cried he, “you are very happy in having such a good old quiz for a father.—I only hope you will never put his affection to such a test again; if you do, you deserve to lose it for ever.—Had I such a parent, by heaven! I would not know how to repay him.”

“Repay him!” repeated Walsh, “I will strive to do it, by the strictest attention to my future conduct.”

“Ah, then!” replied Bunbury, taking his hand, “you will join our party, and quit that of which Lord Archibald Hume is the head!

"head!—You now find, that you played a
"losing game while with them."—Walsh
was silent.—" You *will* be one of us!" cried
Bunbury, joyfully seizing his other hand.

" I will belong to *no* set," returned Col-
ville gravely; " I should be sorry to owe my
" sobriety to any party dislike."

" You mistake me," replied Bunbury;
" we have no party opinions, which occa-
" sions this estrangement of one part of the
" regiment from the other.—No, it is merely
" this—When a young man comes into the
" Guards, he is soon marked for a professed
" libertine, or for a decent sort of a fellow—
" (the latter of which I hope I am !) if he is
" a libertine, in course he associates with
" those who drink and game—if otherwise,
" he certainly must prefer those who have a
" claim to character and respectability.—I
got

“ got into the infernal gang the first month;
“ but Lord Hastings soon brought me back
“ again, and since then I have had the plea-
“ sure of being called a very good boy by my
“ sisters.”

“ I can have no objection to joining your
“ society,” replied Colville, “ but there is
“ one gentleman that belongs to it whom I
“ hate—It is Lord Cantyre—I have good
“ reasons to convince me that he assumes a
“ purity of character to which he has no
“ right.—Lord Hastings, and Charles Loftus,
“ I have the highest respect for, because I
“ have seen them with the daughter of the
“ Earl of Tewksbury, and I have seen Lord
“ Cantyre with her, but I detest him.”

Bunbury was silent, but he struggled to
be so—and then telling Colville he should

call

call on him in the evening, bade him good morning.

On Stanhope's return, the money was sent to Lord John, and Dormer Trevor, and the young men once more found themselves at ease. Yet still the unhappy heart of Colville was full of Frances—he sighed over the dear remembrance of his former bliss, and maddened at the idea of having lost her through his own folly. His recovery was slow, and he received letters from his father, in answer to those which he had written to thank him, informing him, that Lord Sussex was again restored to health. This assurance somewhat aided his recovery, and a week afterwards found him again traversing the obliterated traces of Lady Frances' footsteps in St. James's Park. He had spoken to Stanhope of his intended reform in manners, and change of acquaintance, for he was

com-

completely disgusted with the Humes. Stanhope heard him in silence, nodded assent to all he said, but sneered at it in his own mind. Colville proved the sincerity of his remorse by his actions—for he laid down his vis-à-vis and his curriole—dismissed all his male servants but one, who attended him when he rode out—and gave no more dinners to his riotous companions. Charles was out of humour with this change. He wondered at the whim—told him he was sure Lord Sussex meant to give him the 3,000*l.* not *lend* it to him: but Colville said he was resolved to punish himself, and to reimburse his father out of his own establishment. He was now a total stranger to the house of the Duke of Cheviot: Lady Lucy had forgotten her disappointment in the arms of the ~~bright~~ Earl of Grassmere; for she married him after an acquaintance of a fortnight—and the Humes seemed now to have lost all

interest in the visits of Colville; their reasons for their former conduct were now too obvious to be mistaken. Walsh despised them, and despised Lord Archibald, for he had now become more careless of his manners, thinking the ruin of Walsh perfectly certain, and was totally indifferent about managing a deceit he saw no further use for. Walsh looked back with wonder upon his former deception, and spoke of it to Stanhope. Stanhope acquiesced in his opinion, and promised to withdraw himself by degrees from so intimate a connection with the Hume family, yet he still made their relationship a sufficient plea for often being at their house. Though Colville estranged himself much from his former associates, yet he did not often mix with Bunbury's party, abhorring the idea of meeting Cantyre, to whom he thought he owed nearly all his misfortunes; he often took a solitary stroll in the

Park,

Park, and sat whole evenings at home, musing over the remembrance of Lady Frances, for he despaired of ever again beholding her. In this state of mind, he was surprised by receiving a note from her ladyship in her father's name, requesting him to dine at Surry-house—and adding, that *she* and her cousin were too much pleased with his late conduct not to join in the wish of the Earl to see him the following day. Transported into a sudden delirium of ecstasy, he replied to the billet in a style of agitation and joy too perceptible to be mistaken for assumed emotion. He kissed the traces of her pen a thousand times, and felt himself more gratified by her applause than if he had received that of all the world.

With an indescribable delight, with all those wild, those impossible hopes, so common to the love, Walsh Colville walked

the next day to Surry-house. The Earl met him with unfeigned concern for his late illness; and Frances, when she spoke to him, spoke in her softest voice, while a beautiful suffusion covered her face. There was an interesting tremor in her frame, as she took her seat next Walsh at table, that penetrated his very soul; he knew not to what to attribute it—it might be *pity*—it might be friendship—it might be *love!*—Ah, no! was she not engaged to Lord Cantyre! —the lustre of delight languished in his swimming eyes—he sighed—he was completely wretched.

“ If I ever recover your esteem,” said he in a low voice to the Lady Surry, as she sat blushing by his side, “ I shall be supremely happy—dare I hope that the sincerest re-pentance has at last atoned in some measure for my former faults.”

Be

"Be sincere in that repentance," returned "her ladyship faintly, "and you will possess more than my esteem—Be the friend "of Lord Cantyre, and you shall be mine."

"Lord Cantyre!" repeated Walsh, shuddering as he spoke—"O never!"

Lady Frances looked at him with reproach and grief, and turned without speaking to her cousin Jessie. Colville's former expectations were now annihilated: he dreaded lest this hated rival should come in, and the remainder of the evening was spent in concealed anguish. At supper the so-much-feared visitor made his appearance. Lord Cantyre took his seat beside Jessie St. Leger; he saluted Colville with friendly warmth. Colville returned it with a forced smile: he watched the eyes of Lord Cantyre; they sought not those of Lady Frances, but those

of Jeffie, whose sapphire orbs beamed with rapture as they met his, while the softer blue ones of the fair Surry retained their sweetly unembarrassed expression. Colville gazed at her, and then at Lord Cantyre, with the most piercing scrutiny—his heart beat at every word which fell from the lips of Frances—he watched her every action, every look, and yet he saw nothing to determine his fate for misery. Hope shed her balmy comfort on his heart—he began to think that he might have been deceived—that Stanhope was so too—and that the picture was meant for Miss St. Leger, instead of her cousin. This hope infused a kinder air into his manner as he addressed Lord Cantyre; and during the latter part of the evening he no longer found himself the wretched Colville, but the happy one. When the company separated for the night, Walsh ventured to put the hand of Lady Frances

to

to his lips—she hastily snatched it from him, and turned away in anger—yet there was that trembling confusion in her looks, that blushing terror on her cheek, that still left Colville in suspence and doubt about the regard she felt for him. At one moment he thought she loved him—and again, he started at his own temerity—his own vanity, that could prompt so mad an idea.

On his return home he found Stanhope in all the agonies of despair.—“ By God I’m ruined !” cried he on the entrance of his friend, in a voice of desperate horror.—Walsh stood fixed like a statue, without the power of moving or speaking. Stanhope fiercely struck his head with his hand, and exclaimed—“ She’s gone—gone by heaven, “ and has undone me !”

"Good heaven!" re-echoed Colville,
"are you talking of Elmira Somers?"

"Yes, of her—a damned hypocrite!" returned Charles, his eyes blazing as he spoke :
"she that I took from misery to splendour—
"she is gone—gone off with some cursed
"fellow, and has left me 1600l. in debt by
"her extravagance."

"What?" exclaimed Colville, sinking into a seat, "the unfortunate, the gentle Elmira Somers, whose soul was overflowing with gratitude to her preserver from Lord Can-
tyre?"

"Unfortunate?" contemptuously echoed Stanhope, "all cursed lies."

"How!

"How!" interrupted Walsh, "did not you rescue her from him? Did not you take her from his apartment?"

Charles stared—"O yes, yes," replied he with a confusion that Colville did not interpret rightly; "but she was his mistress; she was tired of him, and wanted to gull me, and she has done it completely, and I am ruined—I must go to prison for her cursed artifice."—Colville's cheek turned a deadly pale: he attempted to speak, but could not, so much was he shocked.—Stanhope still ran on—"Yes, yes, I shall be in the King's Bench to-morrow—the jeweller to whom she owes this debt has already been with me, and swears, that if I have not the sum to-morrow morning, he will force me to pay it.—My God! what shall I do?—Colville, assist me—tell me—could you?—O no,

"no, no—I will not ask it,"—He turned away in an agony,

Colville seized his hand.—"O my Stanhope! tell me but what I can do to assist you, and I will do it."

"O no, no!"—repeated Charles, still turning from him,

Colville urged his request.

"Ah, Walsh!" said Stanhope, drawing a heavy sigh, "if you would promise to be answerable for the debt till I can raise the money—But heavens! how cruel am I to ask it.—No—leave me to my fate."

"Never!" repeated Walsh in a firm tone; "I should very little deserve the name of friend, if I deserted you now.—I am sure my

" my father will assist us—I will tell him your
" story.—Where shall I go with you?—I
" will take the debt as my own, and Sir Wil-
" liam shall never know it.—You can repay
" Lord Sussex when it is convenient; till then
" he will forget it."

Stanhope yielding to the hand of Colville, who led him towards the door, and both flying out, they soon reached the Jeweller's, and transferred the debt from Stanhope to Colville. They returned together—Stanhope all gratitude—Colville all exultation, that he should have had it in his power to prove the reality of his attachment to his friend. In the morning the delusion vanished from the eyes of Walsh: it is wonderful how differently we see things in our cool moments, from what we do in the heat of agonized compassion. He now plainly perceived *he* was for ever ruined; that his fa-
ther

ther would never believe the tale relative to Elmira Somers, and that therefore he should lose his love for ever. He determined to conceal his fears from Stanhope, who now seemed to have none, and inwardly resolved to discharge the debt by instalments from his annual income, along with the sum he thought he owed to his father. With this intention, he gave up his house with Charles's concurrence, and hired lodgings very inferior to his rank in the world. This change of life gave rise to various conjectures among the officers of the brigade; some thought him foolish—some mad—but most imagined that he had been more extravagant than they could have conceived, and had been denied any supplies from his father. Stanhope's distresses had not altered his plan—to be sure he shared with Colville in the charge of apartments—but he still held his curriicle, horses and servant, and was as gay as ever.

Col-

Colville thought it was very unthinking, but that was all. Bunbury had redoubled his attentions since his change of situation : he had tried to win his confidence, by reposing in him the secrets of his heart. He had introduced him to a lovely girl, to whom he was betrothed, and had been for ever offering him every kindness *he* could want, or the other proffer. Colville received it all with gratitude, but reserve. He had been too much mistaken in one friend, to be greedy at catching at another. Lord Archibald Hume had sickened him of specious excellence ; yet he sincerely loved Bunbury, loved him better than he wished to do, and shewed his beloved Helen more than common attention.

CHAP. VII.

— O thou weed !
Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,
That the senses aches at thee ; would thou hadst
Ne'er been born.—

SHAKESPEARE.

ABOUT this time he came to the determination of at once learning his fate from Lady Frances, Surry :—" If she loves this Cantyre," said he, " I will know it—I will no longer be a prey to fancied despair, or the victim of delusive hope."—With this resolve, he drest himself earlier than usual, and was just putting on his hat when the entrance of George Bunbury stopped him. George staid but for an instant, and seeing

Walsh

Walsh still hold his hat in his hand, told him he would walk with him half-way to wherever he was going.—Colville consented, and out they sallied. Bunbury was in high spirits : he had just got a promise from the father of Miss Upton, that his daughter should be his when he was twenty, of which he wanted but two months ; and now in all the glee of his heart he was pouring the news into the ears of Colville, whose bosom was palpitating with doubts so soon to be dispelled, when a hand on his shoulder made him turn round. He turned, expecting to see Stanhope ; but what was his surprize to be accosted by a mean-looking fellow, who told him he had a writ upon him for 1,600l. and he must go with him immediately. Poor Bunbury's laughing face dropt a yard long ; as he listened, he looked aghast at Colville, whose cheeks burned with shame, rage, and disappointment—he seemed battling with his passion—at last he bade the

man

man call a coach, and shaking hands with Bunbury, would have left him, but the other followed him to the coach-door, and entreated him so earnestly to let him accompany them, that Colville more to be rid of his importunity than any thing else, suffered him to get in, and they all drove to a spunging-house in Chancery-Lane. Colville appeared to have completely conquered himself—he was calm, he was resigned.—“Leave me, Bunbury,” said he, after they had sat together near an hour in profound silence: “I thank you from my soul for your kindness, but you can do nothing to extricate me. I have one consolation—my debt was a glorious one—it was to serve a friend.—Let no one know of this—if you tell Stanhope, I am undone—he will be frantic, for I know he has not the power of releasing me.—Do not write to my father; he must know nothing of it—leave me to myself, and

" and forget that such a being as Walsh Colville is in existence!"—As he spoke his voice faltered, and he bent his face over his hand to hide the drops of sorrow which glittered in his eye. Bunbury sighed from the bottom of his heart, and assenting to all he said but the last words, told him that he would call again the next day, and then left him. Walsh, when he found himself alone, gave way to all the agonies of his feelings. Had this blow come at any other time, he could have borne it; but to fall on him just when he was on the point of knowing the interest he held in the heart of Lady Frances Surry, augmented his other sufferings.—“ After this disgrace,” cried he, wildly clasping his hands, “ dare I, can I have the boldness to address her? But I shall never be released from prison—I have no friend who can assist me—and ere my

M

“ father

" father should know of it, I would perish in
" a gaol."

Full of these dreadful ideas, a couple of hours passed away, when the door of the room opened, and Bunbury rushed in with Cantyre.—“ You are free, my dear Colville!” cried George, catching him in his arms—“ Cantyre has released you.”

Cantyre approached with a modest fear.

Walsh turned away his head—“ No, Sir,” cried he to Bunbury, with a haughty coldness, “ I will not accept my liberty from “ him for whose mistress I am confined.”

“ My mistress, Sir!” exclaimed Lord Cantyre, “ what do you mean?”

“ Yes,

"Yes, Sir, your mistress," returned Walsh,
"Elmira Somers—she who deceived both
Charles Stanhope and myself—she who
quitted you at Chatham."

"You speak in riddles," exclaimed Cantyre: "I trust no man can say that I kept a
mistress—and for Chatham, I have not been
there these four years."

"Paltry evasion!" cried Walsh, rising indignantly; "you cannot deny, Sir, but what
you were there the time the Ville de Paris
was launched—that you there had this
infamous woman—that she eloped from
you?—You cannot deny it—you dare
not."

"Yes, Sir, I both *can* and *dare* deny it,"
replied Cantyre with spirit: "Bunbury can
bear me witness that I was at that time at

"the house of General St. Leger on Black-
heath; that I was then watching over the
life of his lovely niece, who was then dan-
gerously ill; for he was there, and knew
that I never quitted the habitation that
held my Jessie."

Walsh was speechless.

Bunbury attested what his friend had said.
"Lady Frances Surry can vouch the truth of
it," cried he, "as well as myself; but pray
who was your informer? some damned raf-
cal or another, who had some interest in
making you hate Cantyre!"

Walsh was still silent—a cold tremor shook
his whole frame—the agony of his heart was
not to be expressed.—Stanhope, his dear
Stanhope, was his informer! and if the at-
testations of Bunbury, Jessie, and Frances,

were to be believed, he was a villain.—He sunk down upon the seat from whence he had risen.—“Bunbury, is this fact?—Can you say that Lady Frances Surry will attest it?”
“That I can,” returned Bunbury eagerly.
“Come with us to the house of Lord Tewkesbury, and you shall be assured of its reality—But who told you this cursed lie?”

Walsh, pale and speechless, rose, and taking hold of George, approached the door—Cantyre followed; his carriage was at the end of the street, and they leaped into it. Colville preserved the profoundest silence during the whole of their journey. When they alighted at Surry-house, they were shewn into a room, where Frances and her cousin sat alone. Bunbury rattled out the story about Cantyre

and Mrs. Somers, and then entreated Frances to inform Walsh whether his lordship was not at that time on Blackheath. Lady Frances complied without hesitation. Colville turned away with an anguish not to be concealed.—“O, no, no,” cried he in a voice trembling with agitation, “it cannot, “cannot be—my Stanhope—my dear Stan-“hope, would never deceive me! Some very “strange mistake has happened—the woman “has deceived him.”

“And pray what was *his* tale?” asked Jessie with the warmest indignation painted on her face. Walsh related it: his auditors preserved a profound silence till he came to that part where Stanhope begged Colville to give his name and countenance to Elmira. At that instant the two cousins looked on one another,

and Frances precipitately flung herself on the neck of Jeffie, and burst into tears. Walsh turned towards her with amazement.

“ I have wronged you, Mr. Colville,” said she, still weeping, and looking on him with unspeakable tenderness, “ I have cruelly wronged you—but Charles Stanhope has been the occasion of it—be convinced, he is unworthy of your regard.”—She drew from her pocket a letter, and giving it to him, added—“ This paper was in my hands when you called upon me after the night of the masquerade, and drew from me drops of pity for your criminal errors.”

Walsh caught it with avidity, and ran over in breathless haste these words, written in the well-known characters of his friend :

“ You interest yourself too deeply for Col-
“ ville—Would to God that you could ei-
“ ther cease to esteem *him*, or that *he* would
“ be more worthy of *your* tenderness. My
“ heart aches for his future fate. Every day
“ sees him more estranged from that dear
“ character once so beloved by me. To
“ add to his other faults, I have discovered
“ that he keeps a mistress in — Street, who
“ passes by his name, and is a woman of the
“ most infamous principles. She is the most
“ abandoned of fallen women. I grieve that
“ I have reason to tell you this; but I re-
“ verence your youth, beauty, and worth
“ too much, to permit you to esteem a pro-
“ fligate, whose only return for such good-
“ ness is by plunging into additional excesses.
“ O, that I could once more see the virtuous
“ Colville ~~but~~ formerly loved!—but, alas!
“ he will never regain that exalted purity
“ of soul, so enviable, so admirable. Adieu,
“ dear

"dear Lady Frances, and be assured that
"the first glimmering of repentance that I
"see in him, shall be communicated to you.
"Yours ever,

"CHARLES STANHOPE."

The letter dropt from the hand of Colville, his lips quivered, his eyes closed, and with a deep sigh he sunk breathless into the arms of Lord Cantyre. Frances sprang almost frantic from the neck of her cousin. The little group surrounded him in a moment; the lovely Surry hung over him, while her tears as they fell washed the pallid features of the unhappy Walsh. Jessie on her knees was bathing his temples with lavender, but he did not yet betray any signs of life. The feelings of Frances were too strong to control.—“O my God, I have killed him!” cried she in a voice of terror, and fell upon a seat, with the convulsive sob

of

of extreme anguish. Her loud sobs, joined with the exertions of Cantyre and Jessie, (for Bunbury was supporting the fainting Frances, who was struggling with an hysterical fit) at length restored Colville to existence. He opened his languid eyes, and sighing heavily closed them again, while the tears of distracted friendship poured from beneath their soft brown lashes. Cantyre raised him up, and supporting his head on his bosom, conjured him to be comforted—offering him the entire possession of his heart, to compensate for the ingratitude of Stanhope.—“O, if you knew how dearly I have loved him!” cried Walsh, striving to hide his tears as they flowed, “you would not ask me to be comforted.—In him I have lost my only solace in misery—my only participant in joy—the only man whose faithful heart was ever open to receive my sorrows.”—“O, and is he perfidious!”—his voice died away

away as he spoke—his blood seemed burning in his veins, as it rushed in successive blushes over his cheek—he was ashamed of his emotions, but he could not conceal them. Cantyre thought it best to be silent, and give the feelings of Colville full scope. A profound stillness now reigned through the whole room, except when it was interrupted by the loud sighs of Colville, and the softer ones of Lady Frances. By degrees the poignancy of his anguish abated, and he was able to withdraw the handkerchief from his eyes which before hid them—they met those of the fair Surry—hers were heavy with tears, and full of an expression so tenderly sweet, that Colville felt them enter like balm into his wounded heart. He addressed her with a hesitating voice—“*Dare I ask,*” said he, “by what means Mr. Stanhope became so intimate with your ladyship as to be

"able to write to you in so free a manner?"

Frances bowed, blushed, and, in a voice scarcely audible, began:—"The friendship subsisting between our families influenced me much in your favour, and the pleasing impression your first visit to our house made upon my cousin and me, made us very eager in attaining your friendship; but the frequent engagements which you had with the Cheviot family rather disgusted us, and made us more circumspect in our manner towards you. After the night of the masquerade, I received a visit from Mr. Stanhope—he enquired first if I had been there, and on my answering in the affirmative, entreated me to pardon his friend for the errors of the night.—'No,' said I, too warmly, 'I should be countenancing such intemperance, if I treated him

" him who was guilty of it with former freedom—Mr. Colville in my eyes is unpar-donable."

" Did you really think so?" asked Walsh with beautiful hesitation.

Frances blushed—" I did at the moment." Colville bowed, and she went on—" Good God!" exclaimed Stanhope, " do you think that he went into that infamous house with his own consent?—No—if the others had not persuaded, nay threatened him with eternal ridicule, Mrs. W—— nor none of her girls could ever have had power to entrap him."

" Merciful heaven!" exclaimed Walsh, his cheek taking a colour even deeper than that of the confused Frances, " did Stanhope say this, and of me?"

" He

" He did," replied her ladyship, " and on
" my appearing petrified with horror hastily
" endeavoured to conceal that you had done
" so—saying he thought that it was to that I
" alluded, when I said your behaviour was
" not to be forgiven; but finding me positive
" in my belief of what I thought he had
" unintentionally made me acquainted with,
" he lamented his imprudence, begged me
" not to notice it to you, and promised faith-
" fully to give me an account of your ac-
" tions for the future, for I was interested in
" your fortune for the sake of our fathers at-
" tachment."—The eye of Frances encoun-
tered that of Jeffie—she blushed, and look-
ing down continued—" After that he visited
" me continually, and gained much upon my
" esteem—that fascinating ingenuousness, so
" well assumed by him, gained him implicit
" belief from me.—He owned himself indis-
" creet, and suffered me to correct him for
" his

" his faults, an account of which I had heard
" from Lord Cantyre, but which I ever
" thought had been exaggerated by the tongue
" of prejudice. After some time defending
" you, he at last seemed to give it up re-
" luctantly, and promised to endeavour to
" reform you.—But there is something, Mr.
" Colville, for which I know not how to ac-
" count—I would interpret every thing to
" your advantage—but I fear—"

" What, what is it, Madam?"—asked Col-
ville eagerly—" By heaven, I will answer
" you every question with sincerity!"

Frances seemed more assured.—" You re-
" collect meeting me in Hyde-Park some
" time ago—Charles had told me that he
" should see me there that day, and I had
" promised to be there. As we were ad-
. " vancing, your scarlet coat attracted our
" eyes

"eyes through the crowd, and Hastings
pointed you out—'Good God!' cried he,
"is it possible, Loftus, that that is Walsh
"Colville in company with those women!"—
"What women?" asked I—"Women of the
town," returned he, "and one of the most
infamous old wretches in the world." I
was shocked to the soul; for when I ap-
proached you, I saw a smile upon your
lips, you were bending down to one of
them.—You saw me, and you bowed.—It
was an insult to me, Sir, that nothing can
extenuate!"

"By heaven and earth!" exclaimed Col-
ville, raising his eyes towards that heaven he
invoked, "I knew it not—I was intro-
duced to them by Lord Archibald Hume
as people of quality, and believed they
were so—Even Stanhope did not know
they were otherwise."

Lady

Lady Frances smiled with delight.—“ I
“ now find,” cried she, “ that I have been
“ the dupe of the most artful of his sex, for
“ what reason God only knows.—Stanhope
“ called on me the next day, and told me
“ that you were in the habit of visiting them,
“ and that if I had any sense of my own dig-
“ nity, I would never see you more. You
“ had already received a letter from me to
“ that purport; he spoke of it in terms of
“ commendation—I was satisfied.”—Colville
sighed and shuddered.—Frances continued.
“ You already know what he said of Mrs.
“ Somers.—I had the curiosity to send a ser-
“ vant to enquire if such a woman really
“ lived in — Street, and I was told she
“ was mistress to an officer who visited her
“ continually. Stanhope still enlarged upon
“ all your follies—he spoke severely of your
“ second intemperate fit—of the avidity with
“ which you gambled—and spoke of the

" 3,000l. that you had lost, as a just punishment for your vices."

Colville's heart beat indignantly as she spoke.—Ungrateful Stanhope! was on his lips.

" And so it is all out at last!" cried Jessie smiling, and giving no time for Colville to reply; " all your private conferences with Stanhope are at length revealed, and have justified my opinion of him.—I presume now that a little explanation is requisite on my side.—You must know, Mr. Walsh Colville," added she, sportively laying her hand on his, while the eyes of Lord Cantyre followed her with the fondest admiration, " that my fair cousin kept all this a profound secret, and appeared to me as if he did not care whether you went to Heaven

" or——Bunbury, you must say the other
" word for me."

" *Or Hell!*" cried Bunbury laughing.

Jessie resumed—" Having always had a
" suspicion that there was more in it than she
" liked should be known—nay, don't look so
" guilty Frances!—and besides having a
" tolerable share of liking for you myself, I
" begged of Bob here—(taking the hand of
" Cantyre with familiar affection)—to put you
" on your guard, and to remonstrate with
" you on your obstinate attachment to the
" Humes, whose acquaintance I foresaw,
" would be your destruction. You treated
" him to be sure very ungraciously, for he
" always came storming to me, vowing that
" he would bear such treatment for the sake
" of no one but myself.—I at last thought of
" a better scheme, which was this—for I

“ saw, that *merely* for the sake of the *friendship* subsisting between your father and “ this lady’s,” looking archly at Frances, “ she was losing her health and her happiness through your misconduct. I contrived, therefore, that Bunbury should ingratiate himself with you, for which he was very eager, and resolved that as soon as he had got a sure footing in your heart, he should then point out to you the danger you were in, through the connections you had fallen into; but this fine stratagem is now rendered abortive by a sudden developement of one of the deepest plans that ever was laid by man.”

Colville took the hand of Cantyre and Bunbury, and regarding them both with a look of gratitude, said, “ How can I enough thank you, my dearest friends? for as such I now consider you.—How can I ask for

giveness

" giveness of you, Lord Cantyre, for the in-
" solence of my conduct?"

" By forgetting it," returned he warmly,
" and by regarding me now in the light of a
" brother."

Colville ~~put his hand to his lips~~, and then rising, approached Frances and Jeffie. He caught the white hand of the trembling Surry—he was on the point of flinging himself at her feet, and avowing his love and his thanks, but he checked himself, and looking at her for an instant with eyes too expressive to be mistaken, pressed the hand he held with agitated fervor, and turned sighing to Jeffie—to her his gratitude was eloquent; yet still the agonizing remembrance of what Stanhope had been once, served to rend his heart.—He retired soon after with Cantyre and Bunbury to his own lodgings, leav-

ing Jeffie to all the anger of Frances, who had ever since her cousin began to narrate been overwhelmed with confusion. The truth of it was, that she sincerely loved Colville, and ashamed of entertaining a regard for one apparently so unworthy, had ever kept it concealed in her own breast, conscious that Jeffie, whose heart belonged to one of the best young men in the world, would severely condemn her weak tenderness; but the piercing eyes of Jeffie had seen through this disguise, for the gradual decline of her cousin's health and spirits had alarmed and distressed her—but too delicate to hurt her feelings, by acquainting her with the knowledge she had of her attachment, she appeared perfectly ignorant of it, though at the same time she generously tried to bring the innocently-traduced Colville to a sense of his errors. Had Frances been less reserved, half those agonies might have been prevented:

for

for by telling what Stanhope constantly told her, she would have heard it all refuted by Lord Cartyre, who knew Stanhope too well to be easily deceived by him. The favourable accounts which Bunbury and Cartyre gave of Walsh's conduct after the play debt, awakened the heart of Lady Frances to fresh tenderness: she thought she had sufficiently punished herself for her unhappy love, by denying herself the sight of Colville, as she now hoped that his reform would be sincere, though it was sudden. In consequence of this alteration of mind, she had written the note at her father's wish, inviting Colville to dine, and had treated him with that kindness which we have seen made him so happy. But let us return to our hero and his companions, who by this time had arrived at his lodgings in a state of mind distressingly wretched.

The moment Walsh entered the house that contained one so perfidious as the false Charles, the less able he was to bear the interview—too gentle to be hotly resentful, he well knew that should he see Stanhope he would betray an emotion at which he ought to revolt—but he struggled to conceal this from Cantyre, and when they entered the drawing-room, he entered it with an assumed firmness of step—but the drawing-room was empty—his heart beat lighter when he saw it, and he took a seat. He complained of a violent head-ache, and Cantyre taking the hint, withdrew with Bunbury, promising to call upon him at an early hour the next day. Colville was now left alone—he looked round the apartment with an agony only to be conceived by those who have felt the same. Every object brought back to his mind those happy hours which he had spent with the faithless Stanhope in confidence and peace.

Alone,

Alone, and far from the scrutiny of every eye, he permitted his tears to flow without restraint to the memory of ~~their~~ ^{those} long, long ~~estim~~ ^{estim'd} ~~time~~.—“O, my father!” cried he with all the bitterness of despair, “it is now I feel “the truth of your words—it is now I find “that Stanhope is no longer the same—that “he is fallen—fallen from all that is amiable.—Ah! had I thought that this capital to which my fond wishes flew would have robbed me of my friend, I never “would have quitted the dear shades of my “native place—happy with my father and “that friend, I should then—but no—Stanhope would have been still lost to *me*—he “would have been here—he would have been “covered with guilt, as he now is.”—Walsh shuddered as he spoke—the tears still fell from his eyes—he wiped them away, and flinging himself back on his seat, resigned himself to a contemplation of all the misery he

he was then plunged into.—At length he suddenly rose, and taking a pen, hastily wrote the following letter to Lady Frances Surry:

“ At this moment of agonizing torture,
“ when my heart is almost breaking for the
“ unworthiness of one too long and too dearly
“ loved, I address you, my sweet friend, to
“ supplicate for what can alone put an end to
“ all my sufferings. O! could I hope that
“ the tender interest which you have con-
“ fessed you have taken in my fortune, even
“ when to you I appeared the most depraved,
“ might now, when every blot is wiped from
“ my character, be softened into an attach-
“ ment, more gratifying than pity, more
“ impassioned than friendship.—Ah! Frances,
“ does not your conscious heart already tell
“ you, that I love you—have you not seen
“ it in my looks—have you not read it in my
“ actions?—Yes, dearest of women! that I
“ do

" *do* love you, the trembling agitation of my
" frame at this instant confesses.—I fly to
" you at this unhappy time, to fill that void
" which Stanhope has made in my soul.—
" I fly for that comfort from you, which I
" can receive from no other.—I am unable
" to combat with the anguish of an almost
" broken heart, and I turn towards you with
" a ray of hope, to catch from your answer
" either total misery, or happiness suffi-
" cient to convert my present tortures into a
" bed of roses.—For those follies which I
" *have* been guilty of, let my youth, my in-
" experience plead—let them be forgotten,
" and the study of my whole life shall be to
" thank you by my actions.

" Yours unalterably,

" WALSH COLVILLE."

He rang the bell as he hastily sealed it;
and desiring the servant to carry it immedi-
ately

ately to Surry-house, enquired when Mr. Stanhope was expected in.—“ He went out “ to spend the evening at the Duke of Che- “ viot’s,” replied the footman: “ he is to “ attend the family to the play, and will “ not be back till near twelve o’clock.”

Walsh was satisfied, and dismissed the man.

CHAP. VIII.

O take me to your arms ;
In spite of all your cruelty, I love you.—

L.E.E.

AS he sat leaning his head upon his hand in melancholy thought, the door of the apartment opened, and Stanhope entered.—Colville rose—he turned pale—and sunk again upon his seat.—Stanhope started back—at last coming forward, he caught hold of Walsh's hands, and told him he had been distracted for him all day, with an air so touchingly sincere, that Colville was shocked:

" God

“ God forgive you, Charles!” exclaimed he, withdrawing his hand with an agony that appalled Stanhope; “ I do from my soul—but “ from this hour we meet no more—you “ have betrayed the confidence that I reposed “ in you—you have cruelly wronged me, “ with what intention heaven only knows.”

“ Wronged you!” echoed Stanhope faintly, and sinking on a chair; “ What do you mean; “ Colville?”

“ Let your own heart answer you,” returned Walsh, still turning from him; “ let “ it suffice *me* to say, that I am acquainted “ with all your baseness in regard to Lady “ Frances.—O Stanhope! could I ever have “ thought that *you*—but I am weak still to la- “ ment you—I will try to forget your former “ virtues with your present crimes.”

Stan-

Stanhope attempted to reply, but he could not, overpowered with a sense of his guilt, his friend's kindness, and a consciousness that nothing he could urge would be of any avail.

“I shall leave you, Sir,” said Colville rising, “to-morrow, never to meet again—“but suffer me to remind you of what you “once were—what I fondly hoped you “would ever continue—but that is all done “away, and I ought to lose the remembrance “of it,” added he, wiping away the tears that hung upon his cheek: “these drops “your unworthiness have wrung from my “heart—but they shall be the last—they are “the struggles of a fond, foolish affection, “that would yet cling to an object no longer “amiable, no longer deserving.—O Stan-“hope! may your last moments bear with “them no reproach for the injuries you have
“tried

" tried to do the warmest and the blindest
" friend." He took a last look at him,
~~and~~ rushed towards the door.

Stanhope seized his hand—"By heaven!
" you shall not leave me," cried he—"No,
" Colville, you shall not, until you have
" heard me own my guilt, and given me your
" forgiveness.—My latter moments may be
" nearer than you think they are.—Should I
" die to-night, should I die to-morrow,
" would you continue to hate my memory?"
The tone of voice in which this was pro-
nounced was so solemn, so affecting, that
Colville, whose soft heart still hung on
Stanhope, sunk upon a seat drowned in
tears, unable to articulate a reply.—Stan-
hope threw himself on his knees before him—
" Colville," said he, taking the hand which
the unhappy Walsh did not attempt to with-
draw, " I confess that I have wronged you
" cruelly,

" cruelly, but let the maddest passion for
" Frances account for it in some measure.—
" I have loved her to distraction—but for her
" charms, I should still have been faithful to
" that friendship I have ever professed.—I ask
" not either for your love or your pity—I
" only solicit your forgiveness—I am un-
" worthy of any thing else—but the sincerest
" repentance I hope may claim that.—O Col-
" ville! should you hear at some future
" day that I am dead, when you and I are
" separated for ever, tell me that you will
" bestow to my memory a tear—would you
" remember me but as the Stanhope you
" once fondly loved!"—the tears of Stan-
hope, as he spoke, bore witness to his truth—
they fell from his eyes in torrents, and Col-
ville, unable to bear it, flung himself impe-
tuously upon the breast of his once-beloved
friend, and sobbed out his pardon—their
tears mingled together.—Stanhope rose from

O

the

the bosom of Colville—"I am satisfied," said he, "I can now meet death without reluctance—Your forgiveness has restored me to myself.—May you be happy is the last wish of my heart when I am out of reach of every human care!—My eyes are now opened to what I have been—to what I am—But for the Humes I should now be worthy of you—the detested advice of Lord Archibald has been my ruin."

Colville grasped his hand with convulsive eagerness.—"Yes, Stanhope, I knew that you alone would never injure me so deeply—live still for me—be ever what you now appear, and you shall still be the dearest friend of this wretched heart.—O Stanhope! to lose thee—" His tears stopped his utterance.

Stanhope

Stanhope wrung his hand with frantic gratitude—"I am unworthy this goodness, Colville—I am indeed—No, no, I can never again be your friend—I will either cover my shame in death, or my life shall prove the sincerity of my repentance.—Adieu! perhaps for ever—this night may be the last in which I shall see you—forget me—forget that I was ever dear to you—O no, forget that I was ever ungrateful!"—As he spoke, he hastily clasped Colville to his heart, and rushed out of the apartment, leaving Walsh in a state of mind too wretched to be described. His tears still streamed over the remembrance of the past scene; but the agonies of his soul were not so horrible as they had at first been, for Stanhope was again sincere—he had acknowledged his crimes, and had been forgiven; yet the mysterious manner in which he had spoken of dying struck him with a panic too acute to be suf-

fered ; he traversed the room in an agitated terror, and at last following Stanhope to his chamber, entreated him to tell him what he meant.

Stanhope said it was uttered without a meaning, or if he had one, with an idea that to live without the esteem of Colville would soon terminate his existence.

Walsh made him promise that nothing should tempt him to suicide, for the agonies of contrition and shame in which he found the repentant Charles too well justified the fear. Pacified with this promise, he retired to his own apartment, where sleep did not close his eyes till day began to dawn.— When he rose, his first thoughts were for his Stanhope : he entered his bed-chamber, but he was not there.—Conceiving him already gone done to breakfast, he proceeded to the

sitting-

sitting-room, where he found only a letter laying on the table, and directed to him ; he tore it open with a palpitating heart, and read with trembling avidity these lines :

“ Unable last night (after your generous
“ forgiveness) to distress your gentle heart
“ with my unhappy situation, I seize this
“ opportunity, when *you* are enjoying the
“ sweet repose of innocence, to bid you per-
“ haps a last farewell. In company with Lord
“ Archibald Hume yesterday morning, after
“ your sudden disappearance, in all the ago-
“ nies of a wounded conscience, in all the
“ agonies of renewed tenderness, I reproached
“ him for advising me to a conduct which
“ had ruined your fortune and my future
“ peace. He denied having ever persuaded
“ me to it, and called me a *liar* and a *vil-*
“ *lain*.—I was enraged, and I repeated his
“ words to himself—he challenged me to

" meet him in Hyde-Park at nine o'clock this
" morning, and probably when you receive
" this letter I shall have expiated by my
" blood the crimes which I have committed.
" I am sick of a life that I have disgraced,
" and I go to meet him with a strong wish
" for death.—Lord Archibald shall not fall—
" I deserve the title that he gave me, though
" not from him.—Should I fall, my dear Col-
" ville, be assured that my latest thoughts
" shall be of you—my latest prayer shall be
" for your happiness!—You will pay the last
" duties to the body of your Stanhope—you
" will shed over it the precious tears of
" friendship and virtue—but I conjure you,
" let Lord Archibald pass unnoticed.—I de-
" serve death, and it is better that I should
" find it from his hands than from my own.
" You will give my final remembrance to my
" family, and tell them that I have injured
" them, for I am deeply in debt.—Receive
" my

" my eternal adieu ! for such I am certain it
" will be, and believe me, your generosity
" has returned me to what I once was.

" CHARLES STANHOPE."

" O my God, he is dead !" exclaimed Colville, frantically striking his forehead as he ended—" I have lost him—lost him for ever!" He rushed out as he was speaking, and flying down stairs, beheld the hall crowded with people—his heart beat quick with terror—he broke through the throng of servants, and beheld Stanhope, pale—senseless—bleeding—stretched upon a sort of litter, and attended by George Bunbury, whose countenance was expressive of the kindest pity.—Colville was in the act of flinging himself on his knees by his side, but Bunbury caught him, and forcibly dragged him into the dining parlour, where the body of Stanhope was conveyed, and left to the

care of Bunbury, who ordered every one to withdraw, except the Surgeon he had with him.—Colville, no longer restrained, flung himself by the side of his lifeless friend, who was stretched upon a sofa, and taking his cold hand, bathed it with the frantic tears of despair, while his gentle heart seemed breaking with every groan he uttered:—His eyes were fixed upon the face of his beloved penitent, while the Surgeon was using all his art to restore him.—“Retire, for ‘God’s sake, Sir!’” said the Surgeon to Colville; “your friend yet lives—to see you so deeply affected may be of the most dangerous consequences.”

Bunbury took the arm of the almost stupefied Walsh, whose senses seemed now bewildered with misery, and forced him to a distant part of the room, behind the sofa which held Charles, but the eyes of Colville

ville were still fixed upon the spot.—Stanhope groaned heavily, and raising up his head, looked round, and then sunk back upon the pillow—“ And will Colville desert me ‘in my last moments?’” said he, in a faint and dying voice.

“ O! never, never,” exclaimed Colville, breaking from the arms of Bunbury with all the energy of madness—“ Never, my Stanhope!” cried he, casting his arms round the neck of his friend; “ I will never quit you more.”—The drops of joy fell from his eyes as he spoke.

The Surgeon took his arm, and plucked him from Charles with a severe frown—“ If, said he, “ you cannot restrain these emotions, I will give up my patient—he is losing blood fast—I have not yet dressed his wounds—will you see him perish?”—

These

These words acted like electricity upon Walsh; he turned away from Stanhope, and flying suddenly out of the room, rushed into another apartment, and flung himself on his knees before God—his prayers for his friend's life were mingled with the bitterest tears, and when he returned again into the room, he found Stanhope more composed than when he had left him. He approached him, and enquiring tenderly how he felt himself, pressed his hand with a deep sigh.

"The gentleman must be removed to his own room," said the Surgeon, "as soon as he can bear it—he is in great danger, and if he does recover, it will be a long time first."

"If he does recover!" echoed Colville, looking with inexpressible anguish upon Stanhope, who, sick and faint, could only look what

what otherwise he would have said.—He made a sign to be carried to his own chamber, and servants were instantly called, who bore him up stairs to the apartment he had so lately quitted in all the health of youth. Colville's tender heart bled at every agonized motion of his friend's countenance, whose anguish from his wound was hardly to be borne. The Surgeon entreated that he might be left quiet—and Walsh, though very reluctantly, retired with Bunbury to the drawing-room—while the Surgeon watched by the bedside of the suffering Charles.

When Colville and George were seated together, the former had time to ask if Lord Archibald was wounded.

“ Hume is not,” replied Bunbury, “ from what I can learn from Captain Stopford, who was his second, and Nugent, who was

“ Stanhope's.

“ hope’s.—I find that Stanhope behaved in
“ the most generous manner—when they
“ came upon the field, he gave Lord Archi-
“ bald the first fire, (who you well know is
“ the finest shot in the kingdom).—Lord Ar-
“ chibald took aim, and the bullet lodged in
“ in Charles’s right side.—Charles fired his
“ piece in the air—staggered a few paces, and
“ then fell.—At that instant, myself and Lord
“ Hastings came upon the spot—we had been
“ on particular business to Knightsbridge, and
“ were then returning through the Park,
“ when the report of pistols startled us—we
“ rushed on, and beheld Stanhope weltering
“ in his blood, supported by Nugent, who
“ looked even more pale than your poor
“ friend.—Lord Archibald was fled—fled,
“ and Stanhope might have died for want of
“ assistance, if we had not instantly procured
“ some, and brought him hither. Nugent
“ and Stopford are at present confined till
“ we

" we know the event.—Hastings quitted me
" in Piccadilly, to see *them* safe in cus-
" tody."

Colville thanked him fervently for what he had done for Stanhope, and then related to Bunbury the scene of the preceding night.—

" O Bunbury!" said Walsh, as he concluded,
" if you could have felt the agonies that I
" suffered when I found Stanhope unwor-
" thy, or those raptures I experienced on
" his avowal of his fault, you would not now
" wonder at the distress you see me in.—I
" dread lest I should lose him even at the
" moment when he is most tenderly dear to
" me."

" I congratulate you with all my soul," said George joyfully; " I am certain from
" what you have told me, that Stanhope will,
" if he lives, be a thousand times more ami-
" able

" able than ever.—Cantyre had resolved to
" call him to an account for what he said
" of him; but when he hears this, I am sure
" he will be satisfied, and join in esteem-
" ing him."

Colville was about to reply, when a servant entered, who put a letter into his hand, and withdrew. Our young soldier having apologized to George, broke the seal, and read as follows :

" After the indiscreet narrative of my cou-
" sin Jessie, which she addressed to you yes-
" terday, I am certain I should sink much in
" your opinion if I disclaimed sentiments
" that I really feel. If the sincerest attach-
" ment of a heart like mine can contribute
" to your happiness—can in any way alle-
" viate the poignancy of your present suffer-
" ings, be assured that it is wholly yours.
" Happy

" Happy as your letter has made me, my
" dearest Colville, (for I do not blush to say
" that it has) yet it still draws from me tears
" of the deepest regret—that I have been
" the instrument to plunge you into such
" misery, is enough to make me inconsolably
" wretched.—Would to God that I had never
" listened to Mr. Stanhope!—He could not
" then have been so criminal—but alas! let
" me entreat of you, as you still love this
" frail friend, to see him once more, before
" you leave him for ever.—Perhaps a sight
" of one so injured—one he so fondly loved
" in his boyish days—may, with the gentle-
" tleness of your reproaches, bring him to a
" sense of what he ought to be.—Time and
" repentance may again restore him to your
" affection—for until then *I* never can be
" sincerely happy—even though possessing
" the love of my Colville.—Yours,

" FRANCES SURRY."

Colville

Colville put the letter to his lips in a transport of joy—his eyes glistened with delight, and taking up a pen, he wrote to her a full account of all that had happened concerning his dear Stanhope.—His thanks to her were short, but they were eloquent, and calculated to impress her mind with an idea of having made him supremely blest.—This he gave to the servant, and then again read over the lines, containing all that he could wish for from Frances. To find her plead for Charles, gave him sensible delight, and where his name was charactered by her pen, he imprinted the paper with a thousand kisses.—When he took his eyes from the letter, he saw Bunbury in a convulsion of laughter.

“ Excuse me, my dear fellow !” cried he, still smiling, “ but I’ll be shot if that is not “ the first love letter you ever received !”

Colville

Colville coloured—“ Love letter!—why
“ should you think it is a love letter?—It is
“ from Lady Frances Surry.” “ Vastly good, indeed!” returned his com-
panion; “ we all know pretty well that she
“ has been dying for you this age—and so
“ don’t deny it, because it will be useless—
“ as Jessie, who knows it, will have told
“ Cantyre—Cantyre will tell me—and then
“ where’s your secret?” “ Well then, it is Bunbury,” replied Col-
ville; “ and I am the happiest creature upon
“ earth—although, to tell you the truth,
“ Frances’s image has never been since last
“ night in my thoughts, so much has my
“ mind been occupied by my dear Charles—
“ Do you think I might be permitted to see
“ him now?”

P

“ Perhaps

"Perhaps you may," returned George, "we can talk." He rang the bell, and ordered the servant to enquire if Mr. Colville and himself might have leave to see Stanhope. The answer was favourable, and Colville with Bunbury entered the room of the poor wounded Charles. Colville, as he sat down and took the hand his friend held out to him, was almost affected to tears—for Stanhope was pale and languid; his eyes had lost all the lively fire they once possessed: they were heavy and swollen—his fine hair was in disorder, and by the dark tints of its masses, as it fell upon his forehead, seemed to render his pallidness more evident.—A faint blush passed over his cheek, when his eyes met those of Bunbury—but Bunbury shook him affectionately by the hand, and bade him keep up his spirits and recover.

"I hope

"I hope I may, for the sake of my dear Colville," said Stanhope, looking tenderly on his friend; "I hope I shall live to see him and Lady Frances happy together."

"Could you be happy and see it?"—asked Colville for the first time, feeling distress at the thought of his union with the fair Surry.

"Supremely so," returned Charles; "I have suffered too much for my attachment to her ladyship to preserve it till this moment.—No, no—her charms, her virtues, now only inspire my admiration, not my love."

Colville then drew the letter of Frances from his bosom, and gave it to Stanhope in silence.

—Stanhope opened, and read it—then returning it to Colville, with a sigh, said—“ I
“ am unworthy such kindness from Frances,
“ but heaven will reward her for it—tell her,
“ Colville, that I am too grateful to be able
“ to express what I feel—tell her that my fu-
“ ture life—(if I do live)—shall be spent in
“ proving myself worthy of such goodness—
“ and if I die—” He stopped, and sighed
deeply.

“ I wish from my soul that I had not
“ shewn it to you !” cried Walsh, wrongly
interpreting his sigh—“ it has made you un-
“ happy.”

“ No,” replied Stanhope, still more de-
jected, “ not more so than I ought, for it
“ has reproached me more cuttingly than
“ the severest execrations, for having at-
“ tempted to injure two such beings as my
“ Colville

“ Colville and his Frances.—Believe me, that
“ my heart at this instant feels not one fond
“ pang for the loss of the most amiable of her
“ sex!”

Colville pressed his hand warmly—his heart
was full of delight, and his eyes expressed
it.

Bunbury saw that Stanhope was too weak
for the exertion he was making, and petitioned
Walsh to quit the room, or else be silent.

A servant tapped at the door, and in-
formed them, that Lord Cantyre was be-
low.

Stanhope caught the arm of Colville as
he rose—“ Tell Lord Cantyre,” said he,
“ that I shall not be happy until he has fo-
“ given me—tell him, that what I have said

“ f

Stanhope opened, and read it—then returning it to Colville, with a sigh, said—“ I am unworthy such kindness from Frances, but heaven will reward her for it—tell her, Colville, that I am too grateful to be able to express what I feel—tell her that my future life—(if I do live)—shall be spent in proving myself worthy of such goodness—and if I die—” He stopped, and sighed deeply.

“ I wish from my soul that I had not shewn it to you!” cried Walsh, wrongly interpreting his sigh—“ it has made you unhappy.”

“ No,” replied Stanhope, still more dejected, “ not more so than I ought, for it has reproached me more cuttingly than the severest execrations, for having attempted to injure two such beings as my Colville

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he rose—" Tell Lord Cantyre," said he,
" that I shall not be happy until he has for-
" given me—tell him, that what I have said
" of

"of him arose not from any antipathy to
"himself, but because I was told by Lord
"John Hume, that he had tried to make
"you dislike me—that he had overheard
"him speak to you of me in terms of ab-
"horrence—but that he *did* do so, I do not
"now believe, for I have discovered that the
"Humes, irritated at your refusal of their
"sister, made it their interest to ruin *you*, and
"employed *me* as their instrument."

"Let this subject close here for ever,"
said Colville, "it is painful to me, as it must
be to you.—I will answer for Cantyre, he
will become your friend—I only entreat
that you will cease to think of things,
the remembrance of which is disagree-
able."

Stanhope looked a grateful assent, and
Colville, leaving Bunbury to watch beside
him,

him, left the apartment. Lord Cantyre had just heard from one of the officers of the regiment he belonged to, the history of the duel, and had flown to Colville's, to enquire after the unhappy Stanhope. He heard the narrative of his late repentance with sincere joy, and gave that forgiveness ^{for which} he claimed with an eager zeal which delighted Walsh.— He would have visited Charles—but Colville, conscious that such a meeting would agitate his friend too much, gently refused the offer, and sent Lord Cantyre away laden with his tenderest love to his Frances and her cousin.

From that hour, the constant attentions of Bunbury, Cantyre, and Colville, united to restore Stanhope to his former health; for a long time the case was doubtful, but at length, youth, peace of mind, and a fine constitution, once more raised him from the
pillow

pillow of sickness, and brought him again into the sweet circle of social fondness.—A pensive melancholy yet hung round him; for though his beloved Walsh had forgotten the past, yet he still recalled it at times to his mind, and when he did so, it called forth the most acute anguish.

Lord Archibald had returned from Spain, to which he had fled, but he was now regarded by Colville with contemptuous dislike, and all intercourse was broken off between the families of Cheviot and Stanhope.

Lord Sussex, at the desire of his son, (who had written him a full account of all that had happened) had petitioned Sir William to discharge the debts of Charles, promising to be responsible for any others he might hereafter incur, if they exceeded the limits of his usual income.

Sir

Sir William was prevailed on, and Charles was once more free from creditors.

Time, and the kind friendship of Lord Cantyre, Bunbury, and Colville, at last wore away every painful remembrance, and restored him to all that charming vivacity, so amusing and so fascinating.—His future conduct justified the fond affection of his Colville, for his life was now adorned with every virtue of human nature, and all the follies and vices of his former one were cast off for ever.

The gentle Walsh, on the day that beheld him one-and-twenty, received Frances as his bride, and saw himself in possession of her, the envy of all the fashionable or the feeling young men in the elegant world.

Q

The

The union of Cantyre and Jessie, and that of Bunbury and Helen Upton, took place some weeks before; and Stanhope, after a year's contemplation of his Colville's felicity, yielded his heart and his hand to the simple graces of Frederica Bunbury, in whose endearing manners and attractive loveliness he found a treasure only to be excelled by the fair Lady Frances Colville.

THE END.



